

## Interview with Langhorne A. Motley

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR LANGHORNE A. MOTLEY

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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*Q: First, let me ask you whether you are any relation to the other Ambassador Motley, the historian? Then perhaps, you can give us a little on your background.*

MOTLEY: No; I don't think I am. I am not one who does a lot of research into family background. My family comes from the Chatham, Virginia, area and specifically a little town called Motley.

I was born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. My father was head of what was then the Atlantic Refinery Company—the predecessor of Atlantic Richfield. In those days, when you went overseas for a business, you stayed for a long period of time. My mother was half Brazilian and half English. I lived in Brazil, in Rio, until I was seventeen and graduated from American high school there. We of course traveled around the country. In my high school class, which had been the largest class ever, we had 28 students representing about 18 nationalities. I thought everybody went to school with a Chinese or a Japanese or a German or a Peruvian. So I was exposed to a lot of cultures in addition to living in Brazil.

I went to the Citadel in South Carolina for my undergraduate training. I graduated in 1960 with a degree in political science and a regular commission in the U.S. Air Force. The top

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five percent of the graduating class were offered regular commissions while the others were tendered reserve commissions. So I entered the Air Force for a period of ten years.

Initially, I was in a missile command which took me to England for three years. I was part of the crew that operated the free world's first ballistic missile—the Thor missile. I was stationed in Norfolk, England. I lived on a RAF base and was part of a RAF crew. I returned to the U.S. and went into the Atlas-F program which was a follow-on missile, based in New Mexico. Then I went to Panama, where I served as the aide to the commander of the Air Force component of U.S. Southern Command (USAFSO). The commander was General Breitweiser, for whom I worked again in three subsequent commands. He had the reputation in the Air Force of being a “clean-up” man. They would send him to sick commands. Unlike other Generals who would take whole staffs with him, Breitweiser only took one aide along and that was me. From Panama, we went to the Military Airlift Command and then to the Air War College and then to Alaska where he commanded the Alaskan Command. This was all in a short period of time. He would go in and straighten out the problems. I stayed three years in Alaska with the Air Force (out of the total ten that I served in the Air Force). I was a Captain, had been promoted to Major and then was offered a job in the Pentagon, where I had been before. It was a good job, but by this time, I was married and had one daughter. My wife and I enjoyed Alaska so much that I resigned my commission after ten years in the service. My boss then was a General who had been head of Air Force personnel, who told me, at the time, that statistically if I had waited for six months, I would not have made that decision because I would have been over the hurdle of ten years, which was the half way mark to retirement.

I did resign in 1970 and stayed in Alaska and went into the real estate development business. In January 1975, I joined the Alaskan State government to administer the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. This was the period in which the Trans-Alaska pipeline was being built. It was a wild and exciting period to be in the public policy sphere in Alaska. You learn the fundamentals of politics at the state level. Every person I have dealt with in Washington will tell you that it is at the state level that you

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really learn the fundamentals of politics, because all politics are local. All the fundamentals of what works or doesn't work were learned by the good politicians in Washington at their state level. I of course had to deal with the environmentalists and the developers; in addition there were other problems. For example, the town of Valdez, where the pipeline's terminal is, went from a small fishing village of 3,000 inhabitants to 12,000 during the construction work. That raised all the attendant problems of schools, water, sewer, housing and all the rest of the infrastructure that has to be developed for a rapidly growing population. Then of course the town went down to 6,000. There were some tough customers among the construction crews. There used to be a bumper sticker in Alaska that said: "Happiness is an Okie leaving town with a Texan under each arm". "Okie" was of course a reference to an Oklahoman who belonged to pipeline-fitters union.

There was a strong urge to impose rent control because there was a lot of gouging. Philosophically, the idea of rent control does not sit well with me. I am from the Adam Smith school of economics. I don't think it works; I have never seen it work. It doesn't work in New York, but nevertheless we were faced with a problem that had to be confronted. So I invented something called "rent review" and in essence set up a board of peers which gave both landlords and renters the opportunity to present their complaints. These boards, appointed by the Governor in various communities, had almost the authority of law behind them. You brought peer pressure to bear. If there was an unreasonable tenant, a landlord could go to the board. But it was mainly for complaints about landlords. The meetings would go on until two o'clock in the morning. It took the steam out of a very difficult situation and it kept me from having to impose a system that, once established, is never terminated. It worked. This was just an example of the problems we faced in Alaska. The social and economic pressures generated by a \$13 billion construction program—this is 1974 dollars—on a State of 400,000 people with a work force of 120,000 plus 40,000 outsiders will distort drastically a society.

I finished working for the State of Alaska in January, 1977 because the U.S. Congress began to consider a bill (HR- 39—The Alaska National Interest Lands Act) introduced

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by the Chairman of the House Interior Committee, Congressman Mo Udall (D-Arizona)—a delightful man who has been the leader of environmental causes for years. This bill, which had 189 co-sponsors—or just 29 members short of majority—in essence would do the planning and zoning of Alaska. In other words, the work that we are accustomed to seeing in our home towns—zoning a vacant lot for a gas station or single residence or apartment building—was being done by Udall's bill for virtually all Alaska. The vast majority of Alaska's land is Federal; some of the rest belongs to the State and to the Natives—40 million acres as result of the Alaskan Settlement Act of the 1970s which compensated the Natives for the settlers moving in and taking the land. This was a unique piece of legislation for which no parallel exists in the lower 48 states for Native Indians. So any land in Alaska is either Federal or State or belongs to the Natives; there is very little private land. Alaska is something like two and a half times the size of Texas, but less than 5% is privately owned.

Udall's bill had the backing of all the environmental coalition; they had been working on it for ten years. It would have locked up Alaska. It would have put over 100 million acres into a “wilderness category” which would have barred any economic activity, no motors—no cars, no boats, no airplanes, no snowmobiles, nothing with a motor. It would have quadrupled the stock of “wilderness” acreage from that existing at the time in National Parks and Refuges. It was a sweeping piece of legislation, but it was a myopic plan. It was introduced, and Udall would agree, solely to protect the environment; it had no other consideration. It didn't concern itself with the future of the Alaskans or any of the natural resources like oil. It was political theater and Udall understood very well what he was doing. The people of Alaska were very upset because they had not been consulted. So a group of us formed a non-profit organization called “Citizens for Management of Alaskan Lands”. We thought this would be a six-week job; I would go to Washington and explain why the law couldn't work and that would be the end of it.

Four years and \$5.5 million of privately raised funds later, President Carter in December, 1980—after the election—signed into law the “Alaska National Interest Lands Act”. It had

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gone through two Congresses. Udall's bill had been drastically cut back down to a third. It was, during the Carter years—1977-80—the number one environmental issue in America. We had to confront long established coalitions including the “Gardens Clubs of America” and so on. It was a cheap pro-environment vote for the politicians because the issue was in someone else's back yard and they could in this way make the Sierra Club feel good. It didn't affect any of them.

*Q: Was the Alaska Group bipartisan?*

MOTLEY: Absolutely. In Alaska, there was only one position. In our steering committee, we had Republicans and Democrats. It was a non-partisan issue. It had a large partisan tilt in Washington. The President was a Democrat; Cecil Andrus was the Democratic Secretary of Interior—one of the best Cabinet officers Carter had, for whom I had great respect. The leader in the House was Mo Udall, a Democrat. I must say that although Udall and Andrus led the fight, they were guys I could deal with and were straight- forward. The Democrats controlled the White House and Congress and exerted their power. The foot soldiers were the environmental groups; Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Friends of the Earth, etc., which are a tough group to deal with.

So in the late 70s, I learned a lot about State and national politics. I lived in Anchorage and worked in Washington; it was a long commute—twelve hours flight each way with a five hour time change in those days.

*Q: How did these experiences lead you to the foreign affair field?*

MOTLEY: I had lived and served overseas and therefore had an interest in foreign affairs. These experiences were reinforced by my academic studies in college. So I always have had an interest in foreign affairs. During the four years I worked on the Alaskan lands issue, I came into contact with a lot of people in the Republican hierarchy—Howard Baker, the Minority Leader in the Senate; John Heinz, the Senator from Pennsylvania, was the chairman of the Republican Senate Election Committee in 1980; Ronald Reagan, the

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former Governor of California, had cut a radio spot for us in 1978 or 79—he did it pro bono because he believed in our cause. So I met a lot of the Republican leadership.

In late 1979, I toyed with the idea of running for the U.S. Senate from Alaska against an incumbent Democratic Senator—Gravel. I thought about it because Gravel was doing a terrible job—I wanted him ousted. I ran a poll and found that I could beat him. I knew I could raise the necessary funds. So around Christmas, 1979, I considered the run. My family, by a vote of four to nothing, including my mother-in-law, told me to forget it. I also questioned whether I wanted to be a Senator. So I didn't run, but I decided to support an old friend, Frank Murkowski, who was also interested and whom I had discussed my plans as well as his. So I took six months off, raised the money for him and ran his campaign. I also worked for the Senate Campaign Re-election Committee to help with the races in the state of Washington and Idaho, which we also won. On election night, after having predicted a week earlier that Murkowski would win by 9-11% points, about 4-5 o'clock EST, we found that many races were going to the Republicans, about a dozen of them. This would result in an almost even representation in the Senate. Goldwater's election in Arizona required a recount as did the Matingly's Georgia election. So Murkowski's victory was critical. I began to get calls from Howard Baker and others saying: "Tell me one more time: how much is Murkowski going to win by?". Murkowski's victory, in chronological order, was the vote that gave the Republicans a majority in the Senate for the first time in 26 years. I kept telling them that although our polls had not yet closed, we would win by 9-11%. It actually turned out to be 13%. I became a very popular man in the Republican hierarchy that night, including among some of the President's entourage. Reagan had of course won early in the night. The Senatorial victories were a surprise. When the election was over, the senior Senator from Alaska—Ted Stevens—became the Majority Whip. So sometime after the election and the elation had died down, I decided that I would like to go to Brazil as Ambassador. It was a dream I had had from high school and college days. There were two jobs I wanted in my youth. Interestingly enough, they were Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs and U.S. Ambassador to Brazil.

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My interest in the job of Assistant Secretary came from my studies at the Citadel. I was the president of the International Affairs Club there. I had studied the hierarchy of the State Department and had learned that the Assistant Secretary ran U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. So these were the two goals I had set out for myself in my youth. I hadn't spent my life plotting to get them, but all of a sudden the opportunity for one of them looked viable. Unlike many of my colleagues, who say that they were perfectly happy with what they were doing in private life, but when the President got down on bended knees and begged them to take this job or that, I make no such claims; I set out to get that job and I worked full time at it; I lobbied hard for it for six months.

*Q: How does one go about lobbying for a job like an Ambassadorship? You had credentials in that you had lived in Brazil and spoke the language. But what is the process?*

MOTLEY: You do it in a manner quite similar to any process to achieve any goals. First of all, you have to draw a road-map. You've got to figure out who makes the decisions on Ambassadorships. Each White House is different, but I sat down with the guys I knew who knew the White House and the State Department and found out who made the decisions regarding Ambassadorships. I found out that the decision-makers were an informal group consisting of Jim Baker, Mike Deaver, Bill Clark—then Deputy Secretary of State—and Wendy Borchert, Deputy Director of White House Personnel. Those were the four decision makers.

Wendy collected the information and was very influential. Clark would look to her because she brought the political dimension to bear. The process then and now, which I believe to be wrong, was for the Department to put up a candidate; then the political system through the Office of Presidential Personnel, would put up a candidate for every job. This Committee would then decide between the two. That is generally the way it worked, although obviously there were exceptions. It is not a very formalized process but it was used in the Reagan years and now in the Bush Administration and I think

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it was also used by President Carter. These Ambassadorial appointments were all Presidential appointments. So there is a lot of push and pull. So first I found out how the system worked. That told me that I had to get my name favorably supported before this Committee. It had to be supported by people for whom they had respect. That is where the road map comes in. Al Haig was then the Secretary of State. Frank Murkowski, although just a freshman Senator, was willing to help. He wanted to see Haig, but was being put off. So one day he went to the Department, to the Secretary's Office and introduced himself. He said he knew that the Secretary was very busy, but he was prepared to wait. That threw the Seventh Floor (the location of the Secretary's office) in a tizzy; they didn't know how to handle that. What were they going to do with a United States Senator? I was amused by Murkowski's action. The Secretary's office is not geared up to handle surprises and the appearance of a Senator who was willing to wait for the Secretary, I am sure they didn't know how to handle the situation. Haig was bemused; he asked Murkowski why he came to see him; it should have been the other way around. Murkowski told him that it was very simple; he had a candidate for the Brazil job who was very qualified and he wanted Haig to give me serious consideration. The fact that I spoke Portuguese was certainly in my favor since we don't have a surplus of Portuguese language experts, unlike Spanish.

The same type of approach was made to other members of that small group: Baker, Deaver and Bill Clark. I went to see the latter myself; I also saw Baker and Deaver, but I had friends who interceded with them on my behalf. Let's face it. The President is going to appoint a number of political people; hopefully, they are all qualified—that is not always the case, just as some Foreign Service officers are also not qualified. For every vacancy there may be four or five candidates; the issue is how you come out on top. So you have to find out when the Brazil assignment is coming up; you have to make sure you have your forces arrayed. I went to see Clark who in turn sent me to see McFarlane, who was the Counselor of the Department at the time; who in turn sent me to Tom Enders, then the Assistant Secretary for American Republic Affairs (ARA). I felt pretty good about the process to that point and I wanted to see Enders to get off on a good foot with him. I was



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not under any illusion that Tom had any part to play in the selection process. He himself had not yet been confirmed, but had considerable sway in determining which Foreign Service officer would be nominated for Brazil by the Department. In fact, he had not focused on Brazil when I saw him. I also had some friends in the system and knew what officers were vying for the job. They were formidable. I kept persisting and people would say to me: "Motley, if you can't have Brazil, what about Uruguay?". And I kept saying that I wanted to be U.S. Ambassador to Brazil and if I couldn't have that, I was not interested in being an Ambassador. I had made that fundamental decision earlier; I was not going to fall in the trap of just wanting to be an Ambassador; there are a lot of people who do that—who are interested in the title. My stand surprised a lot of people; they found it hard to believe that I would return to Alaska if I couldn't get the Brazil job.

Then I had waited long enough and had done all the things I thought needed to be done. Finally, the decision was made. I was the recommendation that went to the President, who accepted it. Anyone who tells you appointments just fall out of the sky doesn't know whereof he speaks; it is a full-time job in order for a political appointee to get what he wants. For a Foreign Service officer to be the Department's nominee is a job for which he also has to work. If he is not willing to do that, then he doesn't understand how the system works.

I did have one problem about going to Brazil; I had dual citizenship having been born in Brazil. The Brazilian citizenship was dormant, but the Brazilians considered me one of them, since I was born there. Under their law, if you are born in Brazil, you remain a Brazilian. In discussing this with both the Department and Itamaraty, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry, we determined that something would have to be done about my dual citizenship—none of these parties involved were comfortable with the U.S. Ambassador having dual citizenship. The trouble was that under Brazilian law, the removal of citizenship was punitive. Under U.S. law, an American citizen can walk into a Consulate and say that he or she renounces the U.S. citizenship; it is an administrative procedure which doesn't have any sanctions attached to it. In Brazil, it is exactly the reverse; citizenship can only be

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revoked by Presidential decree and is virtually always done as punishment. The dilemma was therefore how to remove this problem; they are very legalistic in Latin America—they don't always follow the law, but they are very legalistic. It was a very difficult problem for the Brazilians. They were not getting any help from the U.S. Embassy in Brasilia. My predecessor, who was a nice guy—Bob Sayre—was not really ready to leave so that he was not really trying to get the issue resolved. This is an age old Foreign Service problem; in fact, Sayre was throwing sticks in the way. Finally, some of my Brazilian friends went to the Justice Minister, who had to prepare the Presidential decree. They figured out that the best rationale was that I had volunteered to enter the U.S. Air Force—I was not drafted, which was evidence that I had volunteered to enter the Armed Forces of a foreign nation which should be enough to relieve me of my Brazilian citizenship. That did it and I arrived in September, 1981.

*Q: It has been said that the Reagan administration's "take-over" of the Latin American Bureau and policies was a "hostile" one. The change-over in Latin America is said to have been considerably more ideological.*

MOTLEY: That was absolutely correct. I personally came out of the wilds of Alaska. But in the ideological tug between Carter Democrats and Reagan Republicans there were a lot of issues that separated them. Among them was the foreign policy towards Central America and it revolved around two main areas: a) the single issue politics ascribed to the Carter regime—a nation was judged by its human rights record and b) nuclear non-proliferation. Interestingly enough, most Latin Americans considered both to be domestic issues which were part of their sovereign responsibilities. They didn't care what American ideologues thought. We were, as we are capable of doing so often regardless of which party is in power in Washington, heavy handed. Right after Carter was elected, Vice President Walter Mondale was despatched to Germany to dissuade the Germans from selling a nuclear reactor to the Brazilians. That upset both the Germans and the Brazilians. Mrs. Carter made a trip to Brazil, during which she consciously met with two priests that were leading riots against the Brazilian government. Among Republicans, especially those who cared

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about Latin America, the Carter years were a foreign policy disaster in Latin America. The Democratic administration wasn't concerned about communism or the attendant subversion. It worried only about human rights and non- proliferation; it didn't worry about American business men and other matters. The two administrations just focused on different issues. Therefore, after the election, a change took place, although I don't think that the change between those two administrations was dissimilar to that which took place after previous administration changes from one party to the other. It was perhaps more visible and there were a lot of horror stories about the changes; there were some guys who got hurt and some that have not recovered to this day. But the change may have been more visible, but wasn't that different.

Harry Shlaudeman was Ford's last Assistant Secretary for ARA. He was a career Foreign service officer. He came to work on election day; he was locked out of his office. His personal belongings were put in a box in front of his office. That was one horror story in a previous change-over.

One of the reasons for some of the abruptness was that Carter's Assistant Secretary for Human Rights—Pat Derian— was not loved in the Department because she did not play within the system—she didn't have the discipline to work within it. People who may have agreed with her objectives, used to get irritated with her because of her unorthodox methods—she would call President Carter directly. That irritates a bureaucracy. She was a large target. She left in the days prior to the election and left John Bushnell—a very bright officer—in charge of the ARA Bureau to carry out the policy. He was a very good Foreign Service officer who articulated his orders well. But that drew the attention of the Republican right wing, who were the only ones who really cared and Bushnell was put on their list. James Cheek was another one. But Bushnell was the key target. So when the new Secretary took over the Department, the Bushnells became the targets of the Reagan right. As a matter of fact, the right wasn't overly enthusiastic about Alexander Haig as Secretary of State. Tom Enders, although unknown to the right, was suspicious because he was a Foreign Service officer. So the right was unhappy about the Department. It

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happens in every election; there is an element that thinks it elected the President; they become “bomb throwers”, either from the right or the left—it happened in the Carter days as well.

There are two different groups of people in the American political system: there are those that work like hell to get a candidate elected and there are those that serve. Rarely is an individual a member of both. What happens in every election is that the group that helped the President get elected, feels that it is entitled to the spoils only to find that it is left out after inauguration. That group becomes irritated. To a certain group, that happened in 1980; a lot of the “bomb throwers” who had done yeoman service in the campaign trenches, found themselves not being offered or allowed to take the positions they felt were their right. And that was for very good reason; many were not capable of occupying the jobs they were seeking. That was part of the trouble.

*Q: I have been told that some of Senator Jesse Helms' staff were traveling about announcing policy before the administration had even taken over. Were you aware of any of that?*

MOTLEY: I think that is probably correct. Helms had three staffers who were interested in Central America. They became majority staffers of the Foreign Relations Committee in 1981, when the Republicans took the Senate. It became a different ball game. One was Chris Manion, who had Latin America experience and the others were Dr. Lucier, the senior foreign policy advisor and a young girl, who was a political activist, by the name of Debbie Moss. There was also a guy who left the staff later who also had an interest in Latin America. So when they became members of the majority staff, they felt their oats, even though as members of the legislative branch, they did not have direct responsibility for the conduct of foreign affairs. But once you have an active staffer, there isn't much discipline; Senators and Congressmen don't know how to discipline their staffs. The staffers can travel, there is a budget for that and they can pontificate. If people listen to them, that's their problem.

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The focus was on Central America—Nicaragua and El Salvador. It wasn't so much a matter of letting Somoza go as much as it was a matter of turning the country over to the Communists. That was the central issue; little attention was paid to human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, or the opposition in Chile. The focus was entirely Central America and especially Nicaragua. Panama was an issue, but not a “front burner” one; if it was raised, there was a growl, but it was essentially history. But the center was Central America: El Salvador which we were losing to the communists; Nicaragua, which Carter “gave away”. The new policy was articulated and carried out very well by Tom Enders—who left the job as Assistant Secretary for the wrong reasons.

*Q: Did you have any difficulties with Senator Helms or his staff?*

MOTLEY: It was not an issue because Brazil was not a country of importance to them. It was important to me. The Helms' group worried about Central America and the Washington jobs in the State Department. Brazil was not important to them. I was an unknown to many of the “bomb throwers”, but I had the right credentials—I was a conservative Republican. I had fought the good fight on the Alaska land issue and led the band to which they belonged. They thought it was great that I spoke Portuguese and knew something about the area. So Helms was not an issue.

*Q: Before you left for Brazil, did you get any training?*

MOTLEY: Whatever preparation I got, I got on my own except for the 3-day Ambassadorial Seminar. One of the problems the Foreign Service had—and although it is working on the problem, it still has it to a degree—is that it didn't know how to handle new Ambassadors, either career or non-career. Foreign Service officers know enough about the system so that they manage to get “read in”—they go to the country desk and read background material and speak to their predecessors. It is an informal system. There wasn't a check list for new Ambassadors; we tried later to develop one. I made myself available in Washington at my own expense; there is no mechanism to put you on temporary duty. You

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are not on the payroll until you are sworn in. So I made myself available. I knew enough about governmental processes from my state and Air Force experiences to know who to talk to. I made a point to see the country director for Brazil—Lowell Kilday, later my Deputy Assistant Secretary and Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. He was very knowledgeable, had served in Brazil and spoke Portuguese. I went to see him and struck up a good personal and professional relationship. I told him that I wanted to see people and to read and try to find out what was going on. I am a competitive person by nature; I was determined to do a good job. I had been a regular Air Force officer—I understood the feelings of the career officers toward political appointees. I therefore spent a lot of time learning about Brazil, but no one gave me a check list of “do's”; there is no such system. The problem, which did not exist in Kilday's case, is that most desk officers are young, second or third tour officers, who are awed by the idea of an Ambassador and are not going to tell him or her what to do. There is no book that tells the desk officer how to care and feed an Ambassador. When I became Assistant Secretary, we used to tell all Ambassadorial appointees to get to know their desk officers and the first thing the political appointees got is an “age shock” because the desk officer, who is to be their best friend, is a kid of 28 or 29. This raises some doubts in the Ambassador's mind. Of course, once you convince the Ambassador that this is the right approach, then you have to convince the young officer on the desk that he or she has to tell an Ambassador what needs to be done. So at the beginning of the process, nothing happens. We later made vain attempts to fix that problem, but when I first got started in the State Department, I was pretty much on my own. I was lucky to have Kilday as my “shepherd”, but I also had the advantage of knowing my way around government—State was not much different from other bureaucracies. I knew that Bud McFarlane was an important decision-maker and in my appointment process, Tom Enders was not. By the same token, I knew that if I were to be appointed, I knew that Tom Enders was going to be my boss and I had therefore had to get along with him.

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Foreign Service officers, who are supposed to be skillful at knowing the centers of power in whatever country they serve, do not apply these skills when they are in Washington. I have never understood that. When they come home, they lose their skills.

*Q: Did you receive any instructions before leaving for Brazil or did you set yourself some goals?*

MOTLEY: Tom Enders has one of the deepest and broadest intellects that I have ever encountered—he is so smart and intelligent, that it may be one of his short-comings because he intimidates people—he intimidated some of the political hierarchy which led to his leaving the job of Assistant Secretary sooner than he should. Tom, in his inimitable fashion, told me in a sweeping way that we needed to put a group together which would bring Motley into the fold and see what we should do in Brazil. So he spent 40 seconds on Brazil, giving these instructions, and then back to Central America. I know that is the process because when I took that job, that is what I had to do.

I was asked to write some stuff out of the blue, which in retrospect, was amateurish. There were a couple of specific ideas that were useful. Mainly, we were trying to re-establish a relationship with the Brazilian government which had reached a nadir in the Crater days. The previous President of Brazil, an “elected” military officer, had thrown out the Peace Corps and had thrown out the joint U.S.- Brazil Military Commission even though Brazil was the only Latin American country that fought along side us in World War II and is very proud of that relationship. There was no economic assistance program; there hadn't been one for quite a while and they didn't want one. Relationships were not good; President Geisel was offended by Mrs. Carter's visit; he was most offended that the President's wife would be sent on an official visit—like a mini-state visit. He sent his wife to meet her at the airport. Mrs. Carter considered herself to be a substantive person and all the messages from Washington emphasized that point; she would be empowered to negotiate on behalf of her husband. That didn't sit well in the Latin culture; they may have been wrong; that

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was not the issue; the fact was that the choice of Mrs. Carter to head a delegation was insensitive to the Brazilians' feelings.

That was the climate I entered into when I arrived in Brazil. As Tom Enders said to me: "Always pick your predecessor." I didn't pick my predecessor, but there was no doubt that in the Reagan Administration, the relationships between the two countries improved dramatically. I just happened to be along for the ride. I benefitted from the nadir that I found and was able to accomplish a number of good things. The relationship between President Figueiredo and Reagan did become very good and we managed to achieve a few substantive and a few perceptual goals. The climate was right, although you need to take advantage of that and have the ability to act on it. We were able to do that.

*Q: What was this working group that Enders set up?*

MOTLEY: It was a working group on paper only. I think it only met once. Kilday wrote all the papers. There were four or five issues that had been determined needed fixing. It was typical Department operation; the issues got fuzzed up. One issue was the re-establishment of the military relationship and how to do that—encourage military visits, establish a military liaison office, etc. Another issue was to try to get the Brazilians quietly to sign the Treaty Tetlateloco which would have put the nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguard, but would not confront the issue publicly a la Jimmy Carter. Another problem had to do with what I call the "Flying of the U.S. commercial flag overseas," or pushing U.S. business, which I was delighted to tackle.

It was a generic issue, but became a point of emphasis with the Reagan administration. We did make considerable headway on that point. I had a very creative commercial counselor—and there aren't many creative counselors in the Service. Between the two of us, we got a lot done. He won the Commerce Department's silver award two years in a row. His name was Smelio Iodice, now in Italy, after a tour in Mexico.



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Human rights was not on the agenda because it was just not an issue for the Reagan administration nor a problem in Brazil. Central America came later. But the papers were broad brush and it was left to the Embassy to put the flesh on the bones. In the area of military cooperation, I conned the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and some of the Chiefs of Staff to visit Brazil in the two years I was there. I went with them on their military tours.

Being an effective Ambassador requires as much work in Washington as in the city of your assignment. It stuns me to see the number of Ambassadors who don't understand that. Before I left Washington, I had seen every Secretary of important Cabinet Departments—Agriculture, Commerce, Treasury, Defense, the Coast Guard Commander, the head of the FAA, CIA, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Chief of Staff of each of the services. On the Hill, I called on the foreign affairs committees and the Latin America subcommittee chairmen, although I didn't see the House members until after Senate confirmation—the Senate is very sensitive on that point. I, of course, knew a lot of these guys, so many of the calls were actually re-visits. My theory was and is that if you encounter a problem in a large U.S. representational establishment like we had in Brazil—we had an Embassy and two Consulates General and six Consulates; there were fourteen or fifteen different agencies represented, including a Library of Congress staff in Rio, somebody from the Maritime administration, someone from the FAA, plus the usual representation from Commerce, CIA, Agriculture and the military, DEA—you had to make connections in Washington. You support the agency's representative in the Embassy by asking him or her if there was anything I could do for them while in Washington for consultation. When you send that signal to an embassy, they are going to pull together with you. An Ambassador has to establish himself as the head of the whole Embassy. The challenge for a Foreign Service officer is not to be seen as just the State Department's representative. The challenge for a non-career appointee is to make sure that the other agencies do not perceive him as having been “captured” by State Department or CIA or the military. All other agencies are looking for that “capture”; so it is a challenge. The other Departments are no different than the Department of State; they also have bureaucratic log-jams that

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inhibit decision-making. If you have the ability to call Cap Weinberger, the Secretary of Defense, and ask him why it had taken so long to get a decision out of his International Security Affairs staff, for example, the next call you get is from the ISA Assistant Secretary whom I had called first and not gotten any results. He would ask why I called Cap and I would say that I tried him first, but had not gotten any results.

*Q: What were your views of the Embassy' staff when you arrived in Brasilia?*

MOTLEY: I had met the DCM, George High, before and I asked him to stay on because I was comfortable with him. The relationships between Ambassador and DCM depends a lot on chemistry; whether the Ambassador is comfortable with his deputy. You can complement each other and there may be many other reasons for a combination, but if you don't like each other, it is difficult. It is a very strange relationship which has no comparable situation; not even Captain- Executive Officer relationship in the Navy. My predecessor, Bob Sayre, who was a successful, experienced Foreign Service officer, an Ambassador in several places, by nature a very quiet and shy person, had given the staff the impression that he was either mad at them or didn't care because of his demeanor. I had heard more about the Embassy before I left Washington than after I got to Brasilia. This happens to every Ambassador. People just come out of the woodwork who want to tell you one thing or another. They all have axes to grind; so you listen. There are two cardinal rules: don't ever talk about your predecessor or your successor because no one will ever believe that you are objective about either and the chances are that you are not. The rap in Washington was that Brasilia was a sleepy Embassy that was not getting anything done. I am a great believer in "hitting where they ain't"—that is, you can learn a lot from your predecessor and you can fill holes that he might have left behind. That is a good tactic; you can get a lot of things done that way. I had another advantage; I was unknown to the staff and they were unknown to me; a career Ambassador would not be that way. I was just known as "some real estate salesman from Alaska", as Bob Sayre described me to a newspaper, which I didn't appreciate. I later mentioned that episode to him; we now get along fine after a somewhat rough start. I wasn't so defensive about the

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comment as I was fired up over this whole episode as well as the foot dragging that was taking place in the Ministry of Justice, which finally was resolved under pressure from my friends, not the Embassy.

When I arrived in Brasilia, I had a meeting with the Embassy staff and told them what I expected. My experience in government was that unless people know what is expected of them, they would sit there. For example, I told them that I get very upset, when after a meeting in which we decide to follow a certain course, some one changes that course without letting me know. If the course was not right, then the staff should come back to me for further discussion. But no course changes were to be made without my knowledge lest I go one way and the staff in another. That sort of thing sets me through the roof. Those were the sorts of things that I discussed with the staff.

I was well received by the Brazilians. They were intrigued by the idea of an American Ambassador who spoke Portuguese without a trace of an accent—after all, I was born in the country, my mother was Brazilian. The Brazilian press reaction was very positive and very large which was a novel experience for the Embassy that was not accustomed to a lot or favorable press mention. That made a lot of difference to the staff. I tried to energize the staff. It was not a bad staff; there were one or two officers who terminated their tours early and I wasn't too sorry about them. We all agreed that these curtailments were in the best interests of everybody; it was all done in a gentlemanly way. I went to see Clint Lauderdale, one of the principals in the Personnel Office and Joan Clark, the Director General, and reached an understanding with them. I knew how the government worked; so I went to see them to talk “turkey” with them. I didn't want to hear about panels and all the other procedures; I just wanted them to figure out how my personnel problems could be resolved. If I couldn't get satisfaction from Clint, I went to see Joan; he understood—there were just some things that were beyond his level of responsibility. So we sorted out some of these personnel problems.

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Three weeks after my arrival, we had a visit from Vice- President Bush. He had a very successful visit, which we carried off very well. Working with an advance team was second nature with me; I was able to give the Embassy a level of expertise that they never had before. I told them not to fight the advance men; the only time that we should suggest something different is if it meant getting the Vice- President or me into trouble. Then we should argue; otherwise the advance team should not be told how to re-invent the wheel; I told them: "Try it and you'll like it". Foreign Service people don't like these events; there is a lot of grunt work that needs to be done for a Presidential or Vice- Presidential visit. I went out and did the grunt work with them. I had a Foreign Service officer tell me that he wouldn't carry a walkie-talkie. I told him that he would; I carried one and he would carry one. They weren't that bad; he should try one. A lot of the visit preparation is grunt work—detail work. A President or Vice President do not "visit" a country; they invade it. If anybody thinks differently, they don't know how visits work. When a President arrives, there are six-hundred Americans waiting for him; half of whom have been there for a couple of weeks. The Embassy has to support the operation; it can be overwhelming.

So we had the Vice Presidential visit—very successful. President Figueredo visited Washington and President Ronald Reagan. Reagan reciprocated and came to Brazil for a visit. So we had a lot of these visible activities. Several Cabinet officers came—Malcolm Baldrige (Commerce), Regan (Treasury), Bill Brock (USTR), Cap Weinberger (DOD), The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the three military Chiefs of Staff, Block (Agriculture). In the Carter years, there had not been a Presidential visit, the Vice Presidential visit did not go well—that was on the nuclear issue on which the U.S. and Brazil did not see eye-to-eye, no military chiefs, no Cabinet officers. Maybe one or two odd Deputy Secretaries who happened to pass through Brazil. There was no motivation- -the Brazilians didn't want it.

*Q: Did you urge these visits?*

MOTLEY: Yes, I believe that visits are helpful, even though they are a lot of work. I look at them from a positive point of view. Foreign Service officers see them as occasions,

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and they view Congressional visits this way as well, are very skeptical about such visits. I disagree with them on this issue. They are trained to take the risk out of everything—they are well trained. They are trained to stay out of trouble because diplomacy to a large degree is meticulous work targeted at eliminating potential problems. That training teaches them that a Congressman can be a “loose cannon” who could be trouble; therefore they are wary of Congressional visits. Visits to them are a pain in the neck and can be risky. In fact, they are risky. But I tend to emphasize the positive utility of such visits. So I encouraged CODELs (Congressional Delegations).

*Q: Tell us a little about how you managed the nuclear issue in the 1981-83 period.*

MOTLEY: It did not go well and I will have to discuss this issue carefully because some of the facts were classified and may still be. It is also a very technical issue. Most Foreign Service officers and political appointees may have struggled through college physics and that was the extent of their knowledge. So when you get into the nuclear field, it is an absolutely difficult area. Most policy people—including me, or their staffs do not have the technical knowledge necessary to arrive at certain judgements or decisions.

The questions were whether Brazil was developing a nuclear facility; if it was, how advanced was it; was it being developed for peaceful efforts or did it have more sinister purposes; why hadn't the Brazilians put it under international safeguards of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency; why wouldn't they sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The building they were using was closed. There were reams of analyses from the Defense Intelligence Agency, from CIA and from other agencies, usually disagreeing. So the policy people had to sit in judgment of technical personnel whose findings were different. It is very difficult.

One of the great mysteries was that Brazil was one of the most pacifist countries in the Hemisphere. It didn't have a border dispute although it had ten neighbors. There are some Latin countries that have two neighbors and three border disputes. But the Brazilians

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viewed the question from an entirely different perspective. They said that it was the United States that had developed the atomic bomb and now wanted to deny it to every one else. It becomes a “Third World” issue. Proliferation for the Brazilians was a “Third World” issue —“the have vs the have-nots”. That was a tough argument.

The problem was that you never knew in any great detail what the Brazilians were doing or not doing. There was another issue in the background—not mentioned, but present. By 1981, Brazil had done a lot of business in the Middle East, both military and civilian. They had undertaken huge construction programs—five billion dollars each. They had sold refrigerators, frozen chickens, automobiles— Volkswagen, Brazil, competing against Volkswagen, Germany or General Motors, Brazil competing against General Motors, USA—in the Middle East. These Brazilian exports were bought by the Arab countries with oil, but in addition, the Arabs insisted that the Brazilians take the Arab side in the Israeli-Arab disputes. So the Brazilians beat up on the Israelis in the UN—for example, the Brazilians voted for the “Zionism is racism” resolution. Every UN resolution the Arabs wanted, the Brazilians voted with them. To them, the issue was purely commercial. They had no hard feelings towards Israel, but the Israelis were greatly irritated and so was the Jewish community in the U.S., which is not without political clout. So if you look at who was in the key positions in the Department of Defense and other places which were concerned with nuclear proliferation issues, it was Richard Perle and several others sprinkled around. They became anti-Brazilians because Brazil was anti-Israel. This fact really existed; people didn't talk about it; didn't write about it. But Brazil was viewed negatively by those who had sympathy for Israel. “The Brazilians are bastards on the Israeli issue; they shouldn't get an inch”.

It made arriving at any rational judgment about the Brazilian position almost impossible. So the Brazilians became ineligible for Foreign Military Sales or the Military Assistance Program; there were a lot of road blocks put down by people grinding other axes—in this case, the Israeli ax. That confused the whole issue.

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In the middle of my tour—1982—, Mexico and Brazil went broke. That started the debt crises. We, in the Embassy, were very active. I worked hard in securing for Brazil a bridge loan of \$500 million. This work directly involved the President of Brazil, Secretary of Treasury Don Regan, Secretary of State George Shultz, US Trade Representative Bill Brock and obviously President Reagan. I was the middle man between these top level U.S. officials and the President of Brazil and the Minister of Finance. For fiscal and precedent reasons, the Secretary of the Treasury did not want to make the bridge loan. George Shultz, who had been Treasury Secretary, was comfortable with the proposition. He didn't make economic and financial arguments, but wanted to get it done. The President wanted to get it done. He wanted to help.

Bill Brock had trade matters that he wanted to settle with Brazil. I had been in a bureaucracy long enough to know that what counted is what you have done today, not what you did lately. So I asked Brock what he wanted from the Brazilians and told him that I would obtain that concession in exchange for his support of the bridge loan. I had to make sure everyone was treated equally. What Brock wanted was Brazilian cessation to opposition to a GATT study on service industries—GATT has only dealt with manufacturing— and since more and more of the U.S. economy was becoming the service sector, Brock wanted GATT to do a study on services. Brazil and several other of the usual trouble-makers were blocking the proposal. The Brazilians are very skillful at it; with a small but effective portion of their Foreign Office, it is an ideological plus to stick the finger in the Yankee's eye. Their diplomats are “Third World” oriented; their Foreign Service is steeped in the U.N.-multilateral process. So I went back to President Figueredo and told him what we needed. He said: “That is easy. I'll give an order to stop our opposition”. I told him that it would not be that easy. Sure enough, our Ambassador to GATT in Geneva reported a week later that the Brazilian position had not changed despite the President's order. That raised the level of frustration all around. So Figueredo called in his Foreign Minister and gave him hell. Still nothing happened; our Ambassador in Geneva called me to tell me that there still been no change in the Brazilian position. Finally, on a Saturday



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morning, a relatively senior official of the Foreign Ministry came to see me at my residence—an unusual event. He was visibly upset. The Brazilians have a very professional and capable Foreign Service; that is why they could give us such fits in Geneva. He told me that he had instructions to hand me a copy of a telex that had been sent to the Brazilian Ambassador in Geneva. The Brazilian Ambassador had been instructed to call our Ambassador, Mike Smith, in Geneva to read him these instructions. Ambassador Smith was then to call me to confirm that the Brazilians had received their new instructions. They were completely humiliated. What had happened was the President's Chief of Staff had called the Foreign Ministry and had said since the President's instructions had not been carried out, he would tell them not only what the instructions were, but how they were to be carried out. The Foreign Ministry's intransigence was holding up a loan of \$500 million. Smith called me and told me that he had been read the instructions by the Brazilian Ambassador and that he would hold the Brazilians' feet to the fire. Getting this accomplished in order to provide the bridge loan is part of the fun of the job.

*Q: This story illustrates that Ambassadors and Embassies still are necessary even in this era of direct telephoning and high speed cable transmissions.*

MOTLEY: One of the things I find interesting is the half-truism that says that Ambassadors are irrelevant today because of high speed communications. There are some Foreign Service officers who believe that. The reality is that in a crunch it is the ambassador, if he is capable, who will get things done—if he is not capable, it won't make any difference anyway. Let me give you a few recent examples. Al Adams, our Ambassador to Haiti who was there about two coups ago, went to see the Haitian President during a crisis and had a long chat with him, for about an hour and a half. He told him what President Nixon had faced during the Watergate period and told the Haitian that he should draw comparisons between his and Nixon's positions. No one had sent Adams any instructions to go see the President and to put his life at risk and to discuss Nixon. But Adams had twenty-five years of experience, was smart and decided to have a discussion with the Haitian on his own. This is not something you fax or xerox. Another example: Nathaniel Howell in



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Kuwait. He wakes up one morning in a captured nation in August 1990. For five months, in an Embassy under siege, he displayed the leadership necessary to keep the American flag flying, despite a siege which would not permit the importation of food and water. He kept the Embassy going; there was no rumbling. You don't do that by fax machine. You can go on and on with several other examples. The notion that ambassadors don't count and that they have been superseded by communications isn't true. The role of an ambassador has shifted over the years. You are much more accountable today than Averell Harriman was or any of the other great ambassadors. Ambassadors today are not only more accountable, but are responsible for many more things than the previous generations—security, terrorism, the stewardship of American human and fiscal resources.

Adams is a perfect example. The Haitian President was prepared to bring the whole country down in flames which would create a real problem for the United States. And Adams figured out a line of argument and persuasion which resolved the problem. Did it as far as I can tell on his own initiative. Somebody didn't send him an instruction on it.

*Q: Were you in Brazil during the Falklands War. How did it play in Brazil?*

MOTLEY: It was very interesting. In Latin American politics, the least liked country in South America is Argentina because it has been richer. Buenos Aires is really a European city. Argentina is more European than it is Latin. The Argentineans are considered to be arrogant. When Argentina got into a fight with Great Britain, certainly there was Latin solidarity, but there wasn't much emotion behind it. I had told the British that if they had invaded Peru—if the Falklands had belonged to Peru—they would have had a fire storm on their hands. But Argentina was a different matter. I had very senior government officials say to me that they hoped that the British would teach them a lesson. Of course, then they would go public and talk about Latin American solidarity. I told the British Ambassador the day after the war started that they would be viewed before the end of the war as the honorable enemy and we would be seen as the dishonorable ally. In essence, that is the way it turned out. Harry Shlaudeman, who was our very capable Ambassador to

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Argentina, sent fascinating cables which were repeated to us. Al Haig, who was shuttling between London and Buenos Aires, would refuel in Belem, Brazil, both coming and going. So I would get into my attaché's airplane—we had a twin Beech as the Embassy's airplane—and fly to Belem to meet Haig. While he stretched his legs and walked, he talked about what Mrs. Thatcher had said and what President Galtieri had said. So it was interesting for me to eavesdrop on the negotiations.

The biggest pressure I had was to try to explain to the Brazilians why we were doing what we were. Whereas privately they would understand it, publicly they still had to condemn the British and talk about Latin solidarity. The Brazilians tried to calm down some of the extreme Latins. The whole of Latin America was going to leave the OAS or were going to form an OAS without the United States. Brazilians worked quietly in the background, urging caution. They were helpful in that sense. But I had to explain to Washington, that in public, the Brazilians would scream like all their neighbors. We did have one incident. A British bomber could not refuel in the air coming from a mission. And it could not make it to the Ascension Islands. It declared an emergency and asked to land in Rio. The Brazilian scrambled two fighters (by breaking the sound barrier on take off, they broke a number of windows on Copacabana Beach); they flew so fast that they went right past the bomber and by the time they turned around, the bomber was already on his final approach for a landing. He got permission to do so about the time his wheels were hitting the runway—he was of course running out of fuel and had no choice. The bomber was still armed—had missiles. I was called because the missiles were American made—we had been supplying them covertly. These were advanced missiles and we didn't want anyone to get their hands on them. The British Ambassador got into the act, trying to protect the bomber and its crew. And I am saying to him: "Don't let them touch our missiles! Don't let them out of your (British) control". That brought on a three way conversation between the Brazilians, the British and ourselves. The Brazilians wanted to unarm the plane—it was in the civilian part of the airport. They wouldn't let the crew sleep there. The plane had to be fixed with parts flown from Great Britain. That would take 24-48 hours. The RAF crew was capable of

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disarming the plane; the Brazilians wouldn't let them do that. We weren't sure they could. Gallow's humor prevailed: because the plane was pointed towards Guanabara Bay Bridge, which linked two main parts of the city. The missile, if it been discharged would have taken out the bridge. They finally resolved that problem. The Brazilians unloaded the missiles under British supervision. Then the question arose as what to do with the missiles. They wanted them placed in storage; we agreed but wanted some one to watch. The Brazilians said that wasn't necessary. Finally, it was agreed that the sealed storage area could be opened only by two sets of keys; one would be held by the Brazilians and the other by the British. Good solution! We had ways of knowing what was going on and we found out that in fact the Brazilians entered the sealed room and looked at the missile. Fortunately, they couldn't learn much. Of course, they professed the whole time that they hadn't looked at the missile. We chose not to call their hand because that would have revealed intelligence sources and methods. It was an interesting event and the closest that we got to being involved in the Falklands War. Of course, the U.S. image got degraded because the leftist nationalists in Latin America were having a field day feeding on the emotions raised by a Latin island being attacked by British, assisted by the Yanks. I told them that we would help Great Britain; it was our mother-country. I took the offensive— not looking for a fight, but also not being defensive about it.

One interesting matter that was important during this time. There were 81 embassies in Brasilia. The 20 odd Latin American Ambassadors had an association and they invited me to join. My predecessor had elected not to join. I looked into the background and I had the feeling that they would have liked me to join and were somewhat upset that my predecessor had not. No one could tell me that there was any harm in joining. So I decided to join and attend the boring luncheons once a month. When it was my turn, I would host them at the residence. It gave me an opportunity to take care of these guys instead of seeing them in the office. The American Ambassador still carried a lot of weight in most places and they would use me to find out what was going on and that would assist them in writing their reporting cables. So instead of seeing them one at a time in the office, I would

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see them all together and would save myself a lot of time. It was a useful device; besides I learned something from most of them. They spoke Spanish and I spoke Spanish; so it was an easy relationship.

Then came the Falklands War (or the Malvinas Island War, as the Latins called them)—to compromise I called it the “Falkinas” War)—. The Latin Ambassadors couldn't dis-invite me from their association; so I remained a member while at the same time representing their nemesis. So we continued communications—I carried messages between the Argentinean and British Ambassadors because they could not obviously talk to each other. They were of no great substance, but the two of them had worked an arrangement to keep out of trouble in Brazil. They weren't shooting at each other in Brazil. Both Ambassadors were pros and were trying to control the damage and I could carry messages from one to the other.

*Q: How did you deal with the regime and the leftist elements?*

MOTLEY: Brazil's government was headed by a military officer. That had been the case for twenty years. The Cabinet consisted of both military (or ex-military) and civilian officials. As far as the left was concerned, I had told the head of the Brazilian Secret Service—comparable to our CIA—, who was also a principal advisor to the President, that I would see everybody who was not under indictment or was a fugitive or someone against whom the government had some kind of process going. I explained that is the way the Americans worked. I told him that I would learn something that way and furthermore, this balance of contacts was expected of us. By dealing with everybody, the United States gained the credibility it needed. He didn't have much choice except to agree with my position. He asked me why I was telling him; I replied by saying that the following week I would visit a man by the name of Brizola who in 1964—the year of the revolution—had been the Minister of Labor and the then President's brother-in-law. He had incited the navy sergeants to strike against the officers which led to the revolution in which his brother-in-law was overthrown. He ran from the military who, had they caught him, would have

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undoubtedly killed him. He went to Uruguay. He loved Bobby Kennedy, then Attorney General, because he had authorized the issuance of a visa to him overnight so he could visit the US after being thrown out of Uruguay. Brizola had never forgotten that and after that, every time he came to Washington, he would visit the Kennedy family. So he had been in exile since 1964. When the “democratization” of Brazil started with election of governors in 1982, he wanted to become a candidate. The military decided to let all exiles return to start the process. So he was the big fish and I wanted to see him. I told the Head of Brazilian Intelligence that he would know anyway since his people would be watching and reporting the visit.

So I went; I was the first Ambassador to see him and to this day, he has never forgotten that. He is now the Governor again of the Rio province. He lost the Presidential election in between. But he never forgot and that visit has always stood me in good stead. I saw the “responsible” left. I went to see the main leftist bishop. I had a marvelous conversation with him. I am a Catholic, born and raised in Brazil, educated by the Catholic Church. I stuck the needle to him a little because his was not the Church I knew as a child. I told him that I was confused; when I was a kid all the clergy wore habits—you could tell who was who. The Mass was said in Latin and the clergy spent its time worrying about confirmations and First Communions. I then noted that we had talked for an hour and that he only told me about the political and social activities that he was involved in. So we had this long discussion mainly to make me feel good; I wasn't going to change his mind. I learned a lot about what they were up to which were essentially political activities.

*Q: Did you have any problem with the reporting of the Embassy? Did our officers lean too far to one side or another?*

MOTLEY: No. What we didn't cover too well, partly because it didn't matter, was the Congress. It didn't have much power. I tried to improve the coverage, but I don't know how successful I was. Subsequently, Harry Shlaudeman did build it up. He did a good job as did Diego Asencio, who was my immediate successor. Harry followed him and both built

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it up. The problem I did have when I arrived was the reporting from the constituent posts. That seems to be a problem in the Foreign Service which I did not recognize until I got to Brazil. It was probably just as well that I didn't recognize it because I might have gone after it in a conventional way and may not have solved it. When I got to Brazil, the Consulate General in Rio was bigger than 40% of our Embassies and the Consulate General in San Paulo was not too far behind. They were always headed by a senior officer and liked autonomy. One was called the "Duke of San Paulo" and the other was known as the "Earl of Rio". They did not like the Ambassador. Tensions were bad. I got there just after a new "Duke" and a new "Earl" had arrived. I had heard stories about these tensions. A lot of the argument was over reporting. The rub usually came between the Political or Economic Counselors and the Consuls General. So I called the two Consuls General in and told them that there were no "Earls" or "Dukes"; only one "King" and that was me. They could report whatever they wanted, but that if it were national in scope, it had to be sent to the Embassy and we would put it together with other information. If the matter was a local one, they could report directly to Washington; I would let them decide which was which. If they made a wrong judgment, I would tell them. I had used such a system before; they had to make the decision between "local" and "national" and if they were wrong I would jump on them; that was better than us passing judgment on every report. I never had a problem with either one of them after that. The system worked just fine. But only later, when I was Assistant Secretary, did I realize that this was a perennial problem for all Embassies. It did put pressure on the DCM to whom I looked to oversee the constituent posts; I didn't have the time. Of course, the rub is that if the DCM is energetic, he wants to become the Consul General who then resents the intrusion of the DCM or the Administrative Officer or whomever. I told all of them that they were big boys, experienced Foreign Service officers; they were supposed to be able to lead and manage and not get into fights with each other. I told them that if I had to referee, I would be mad and that their efficiency reports would so reflect. So they worked it among themselves.

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*Q: Tell us about your relationship with the military attach#s, which in Latin America, seemed to have played a role somewhat independent of the Embassy?*

MOTLEY: I have heard the same accusation. When I was in SOUTHCOM in 1964, the attach#s were part of the MilGroups which we felt belonged to us and not the Ambassadors. So I had a different perspective when I went to Brazil. I had worked with all of these attach#s and I had heard attach#s complain about ambassadors. So I had seen the other side of the coin. The General and I would visit all the posts and would be hosted by ambassadors. I watched the relationships and it was good in some places and bad in others. By 1980, it was a new ball game. There is some truth to the allegation that except for the Army, the Services did not assign their top drawer personnel to be attach#s. The Navy was the worst and the Air Force only a little better. The Army had gotten smart and had begun to give promotions to those officers that served as attach#s. Brazil was one of the five Embassies that had General Officers as Defense Attach#s. "Colonel" Dick Walters, now our Ambassador to Germany, was the Defense Attach# when Lincoln Gordon was our Ambassador. Castelo Branco, who led the 1964 revolution, had been Walters' tent-mate during World War II. So between Gordon's very good connections and Walters', they had the thing wired. They knew what was going to happen before the Brazilians knew. They also had Frank Carlucci and Peter Brintnall, who later became the Defense Attach#. Also a Major Art Moura, later became a general officer in the Attach# position. It was quite a crowd.

So I had known all these guys from 1964. When I was in Panama in that year, Dick Walters was a colonel in Brazil. When the revolution came, they were so well wired in that people were convinced that the revolution was fostered by the U.S. government, which it wasn't. When McNamara, then Secretary of Defense, was briefed by Gordon and Walters, he said that Walters was the best Attach# in the business and wanted to know why he wasn't a general. The Army didn't want to promote him because he was not a "Combat Arms" officer; he had never commanded troops. That didn't sway McNamara and



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so the Army didn't have any choice. Walters was promoted to Brigadier General. But the accusation about the attach#s is not so true anymore.

We did make a mistake in Brazil in the sense that we rotated the job of Defense Attach# among the three services. I had seen this done before—the dividing of the pot world-wide among the three services. There were a lot of arguments about these assignments, even into the “tank” (the meeting room of the Joint Chiefs of Staff). There were only so many general officers' jobs and so some rotated—e.g. Brazil. One tour would be Army, the next Navy and then the Air Force. It is important to all services because they have ceilings on the number of general officers they can have and therefore could place one of them in the Attach# job. But in fact, it should not have been rotated in Brazil. That is an Army country. I had a Navy Admiral who was very good, but who was literally “a fish out of water”. An Admiral in Brasilia? When he was to leave, it was the Air Force's turn, but I wanted an Army guy. I made a deal with the Army Chief of Staff. If I got the assignment to go to the Army, I could select my Defense Attach#. I told him I wanted Pete Brintnall, who was then a Colonel, but who had served in Brazil for Walters as a Major. The Chief said that Brintnall was a fine Colonel, but competition for general was tough. I told him that if he would get Pete on the list, I would get him the Defense Attach# job. He agreed. I then went to the Marine Corps Commander who voted on these issues along with the three Joint Chiefs and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. I got his agreement because it made sense to send an experienced officer to Brazil; the Chairman was an Army man who would vote with me. So I had the three votes necessary—the Chairman, the Army Chief of Staff and the Marine Commander. The issue was raised; the vote was taken, we won. The Air Force Chief—Charlie Gabriel, whom I knew—called me half kiddingly and said: “You traitor!”

*Q: What was your impression of the Brazilian Government and its President while you were there?*

MOTLEY: The Foreign Ministry was very active—a little old fashioned, a little ritualistic, but good. Oriented towards the Third World—the G-77 (the group of Third World developing



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countries that band together at the UN (the Indians, the Bangladeshis, Libyans, Cubans—all the guys that cause problems). They always have had that orientation.

Many of the military officers that served in a civilian capacity were very good. The government was very hierarchical. The President ran the Palace. He had three or four guys in the Palace that were key and whom I got to know quite well. I was very lucky that the President Figuereido took a liking to me. It made a difference because the Foreign Ministry took the view that ambassadors dealt only with it. My predecessor stuck to that very much. He would call on other Ministers as well, but worked through the Foreign Ministry primarily. I saw right at the beginning that what I wanted to do—improve relations—was not on the Foreign Ministry's agenda.

In Mexico, which is run by the PRI, there is a left wing of the Party that wants to do things that the President doesn't want to do. The left wing of the PRI is more leftist than most Mexican Presidents. What they do historically is to give the Foreign Ministry to that left wing. Then it plays footsie with Cuba; Mexico has the largest Soviet mission in Latin America; they kick sand into the gringos' faces.

It isn't quite that simple in Brazil because there isn't just one party. But the Foreign Ministry is leftist, mainly nationalist and to a certain degree, anti-American. So I could see that was not the route to success. Also my style generated press support which did not sit well with the Foreign Ministry. You don't highlight one Ambassador when there are 80 others. Also by highlighting the gringo you cause problems. My start with the Foreign Minister was bad. I could tell that there were no good vibes between us. Because of Bush's visit and others, I got to know the President and the guys around him. I would call them and I would go to the President's Palace and see the Chief of Staff or the head of the military household or the head of the civilian household or the head of the Service—these were the influential guys. Sometimes they would tell me that they would send a car and that I was not to use my car. So I entered the back-door of the Palace. Both the President and I had a tendency to talk plainly; we got along fine. He didn't speak much English, so that

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our conversations were in Portuguese. He was an old cavalry officer and I could use his language having been brought up in Brazil. He loved to tell stories. He would invite me to the Brazilian version of Camp David. I was the first Ambassador to go there. I would go on Saturdays when he had “Churrascos,” the Brazilian version of the barbecue. He would ride horses and then we'd sit around and talk. The party would include himself, the Minister of the Army, who was his classmate, the head of the Air Force, who was also his classmate, the head of the Secret Service and me. These were the guys who ran the country. It would drive the Foreign Minister nuts. I would get more work done that way than in any other fashion. The Foreign Ministry people were effective, but they weren't interested in my agenda. So I had to go around them and I was successful and to this day, that sticks in the Foreign Minister's craw. It was interesting that the Foreign Minister was the brother-in-law of the head of the Secret Service, but they had a totally different orientation. They were both nationalists, but the Foreign Minister was very much in the G-77 mold, worrying about the Third World—North-South dialogue and all those related issues. The head of the Secret Service couldn't care less about that kind of stuff. The Foreign Minister knew that I was invited to these Saturday festivities and that he wasn't. It was a humiliation for him. My presence and activities went beyond irritation; it became humiliation. And that degrades relationships. You don't really want to go to war with the Foreign Minister; you are in his country. I had to go around him and tried not to rub his nose in it to get things done because if I had had to depend on him, nothing would have moved. I'll give you an example: I was trying to get one more military officer for our military staff in Brasilia—what had to be known as the MilGroup until the Brazilians terminated it. The MilGroup was the military advice and assistance group—training, tactics. The Attach# collects information; the MilGroup works on relationships between military, assist in training, they do troop exchanges, etc. I was trying to get an extra officer into the embassy in Brasilia to start a Military Liaison Team. The Foreign Office fought and fought me on it. They said they didn't want it; they said that the Army didn't want it. All I wanted was one U.S. military officer. The Brazilian Purchasing Commission in Washington had 112 officers; I had someone count them. It was a nice perk for them. I went to the Minister of War and

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told him that I was trying to get just this one position. He mumbled something; so I told him that he didn't understand. If I were not to get approval for that one position, the U.S. government would re-examine the size of the Purchasing Commission in Washington. That got his attention; these were plum assignments. So he called the Foreign Minister and told him that he wanted the position approved today and slammed the phone. That was the end of that problem. The Foreign Minister knew that I gone to the Minister of War.

*Q: Did your style of operations have any impact on the relationships that your staff had to have with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?*

MOTLEY: They tried to mend the many “rice bowls” that I might have broken. I should note that the animosity was a personal matter with the Foreign Minister. Below him, there were a lot of close friends. The Secretary General— the number two man in the Foreign Ministry, who is now the Secretary General of the OAS (Organization of American States) —and I got along like a “house on fire”. I still see him all the time. The Foreign Minister's spokesman, with whom I dealt a lot, is now the Brazilian Ambassador to the OAS. We used to lunch together once a month. The tensions didn't really permeate below the Foreign Minister except for a few guys—their “bomb-throwers.” In any case my staff didn't find doors slammed in their faces. The second thing my staff found is that they could ride my wave. My situation helped them. I would go see a Cabinet Officer and tell him that a member of my staff would come over and work out the details with his staff. And so it was done.

*Q: Didn't you find it a myth that the Foreign Service does not respond well to a Presidential appointee? Doesn't it care more about the effectiveness of the individual?*

MOTLEY: One of the things I said to the Embassy officers when I arrived was: “Look. I recognize that I am a political appointee and that I am taking bread out of some Foreign service officer's mouth. I recognize that. If you resent my appointment, I understand. If you dwell on it, we have a problem”. That is all I said and we never had any difficulties.

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I can understand the resentment the Foreign Service may have. In explaining the Foreign Service view, I ask people to assume that every fourth general officer in the military services were a political appointee and then I ask them what their reactions would be. That puts it an entirely different context. On the other hand, it is in the interest of the Foreign Service at an overseas post to make the American Ambassador look good. It doesn't make any difference whether he or she is career or non-career. The staff will be happier and look better if he or she looks good. It is that simple. That is the message I give to political appointees. The people in the Embassy want him or her to succeed and they shouldn't think otherwise.

*Q: Was there a problem with either you or your staff in representing the Reagan Administration? It had made a major change in U.S. foreign policy in the region.*

MOTLEY: I didn't have any problems with it. If anyone on my staff had any problems, they hid them from me. I didn't see it. Some of the demarches—a presentation of U.S.' views—were a pain in the neck; it was not a matter of whether you liked them or not; some were just more difficult to present than others. Some just muddled the waters; it wasn't a policy difference.

*Q: President Reagan came to Brazil while you were there. How did he respond to Brazil?*

MOTLEY: He responded very favorably. After becoming Assistant Secretary, I would see him about once a week in the Oval Office because he took a great deal of interest in Central America. It is interesting to note how various people view Latin America. It depends from which part the USA one comes from. A Lyndon Johnson sees Latin America from a Tex-Mex point of view—these are good old fellows and we treat them well; a very subservient role. If you are John Kennedy and come from Massachusetts you take a liberal approach and you worry about these poor down-trodden people who need our help—we will nicely tell them what to do. A Californian, like Reagan, has a Spanish influence on a Mexican influence because the Mexicanization of California was really a

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Spanishization. So they have a Spanish view which is different from the Texan, more knowledgeable and less altruistic than the Massachusetts point of view. I found Reagan's view of Latin American to be a friendly one, an open one with none of the hang-ups of the other two I have discussed. It was what I call a California view.

Reagan did take a great interest in Central America. We spent a lot of time on it.

*Q: How did you get appointed Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs in 1983?*

MOTLEY: I had managed the Vice President's and the President's visit to Brazil. I had brought the President of Brazil to Washington. It is fair to say that the impression in both the White House and the State Department was that I had done a good job in Brazil. The debt issue was handled; the GATT problem had been solved; Bush's visit had gone well and he had warm things to say about it; Reagan had been in Brazil and he liked it. So for a variety of reasons, I was viewed as having done a good job. In the Spring of 1983, I was back in Washington for consultation and I saw the President, Shultz and some of the White House staff. Tom Enders, who was the Assistant secretary at the time, was under attack for our Central American policy. A lot was coming from the right wing "bomb throwers," but in an atmospheric type of thing. He was having problems in the White House because he was being attacked by the right wing. That situation creates problems for people who may not be of the extreme right, like Deaver, etc. But the Deavers of the world had to keep the trains running on time.

Enders was 6'7". He had a great intellectual grasp. Because of his physical size and intellectual strength, sometimes he intimidated people. That did not make him very popular. Shultz had mentioned to me the specific problem Tom had—after his confirmation difficulties with Jesse Helms, which we got solved and I had a hand in that (he had served as Acting Assistant Secretary for a year before confirmation). Both Shultz and Bill Clark, then at the NSC, discussed Enders with me. The political side of the White House advised me that they thought that Enders would be leaving. Clark was down on Enders—no doubt

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about it. I had heard that Jeane Kirkpatrick, then our Ambassador at the UN, was also down on Enders, but I never discussed the matter with her. I didn't have that much to do with her; she may have had an interest in Latin America, but as far as I was concerned, she was at the UN and wasn't part of the Latin America policy development. But Clark was down on Enders and he asked me whether I would take the Assistant Secretary position. I said that Enders was there and was doing a good job. Subsequently, I found out that I was not the only person he approached on this question. I was somewhat startled by Clark's question and I reported the conversation to Shultz, whom I considered to be my boss. He seemed a little irritated with Clark's apparent meddling. George Shultz is a marvelous person; he just doesn't react well to situations of this kind. In any case, I returned to Brazil, but I was called back. Shultz talked to me; I knew that I was not Shultz' first choice and I have kiddingly reminded him of that many years later. We became very close friends; I still see him and play golf with him and he has written me about his book. At the time he said to me: "If this comes about, will you take the job? The President would like you to take it". I told him that I didn't want to leave Brazil, but if that was the decision, I would of course take the job. What else could I say? I didn't have any choice; that is, I did and I didn't. After I returned they called me and said that the appointment had been approved, but that no announcement would be made—typical Washington deal. I hadn't said anything to anybody. Harry Kopp, who was my deputy and now my partner, didn't know anything. No one at the Embassy knew; my wife knew; my kids didn't.

The President took the shortest airplane ride in history from Washington to Williamsburg for the Economic Summit. During it, he announced my appointment. So I began to get these frantic calls from Ray Seitz, telling me that the news was on the AP wire. I was at a school board meeting—Ambassadors do a variety of chores. The way it worked out didn't permit me to follow all the protocol niceties—see the Foreign Minister, tell the President, etc. But that is how the appointment came. I was acceptable to Clark because I had gotten some things done. A small NSC group involving senior White House, Department of Defense and CIA officials, had been involved in an activity that I helped orchestrate for

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them which turned out very favorably. That further enhanced my image with Clark and other senior officials. So I had NSC staff support. The right wing was happy, although they didn't stay that way. So everything was fine. The fact was that they wanted to get rid of Enders and almost anyone would have looked good. The biggest problem I had, when the story broke, was trying to keep Enders' team together in Washington. I had a lot of respect for them individually. That alienated me right away with the right wing. The moment the announcement was made I called Enders with whom I had a good relationship. I had a lot of respect for him. I assured him that I had not followed his advice about picking one's predecessor. He told me that he understood. I wanted him to know—and he knew—that I had not campaigned for his job. I also told him that I was going to talk to his staff, but I wanted him to tell them first that I was hoping that they would stay. They knew why he was being fired; their morale was low and no doubt they were looking for other opportunities. But I wanted them to stay. I called the secretaries and asked them to stay. I called the three deputies who were attending a symposium and got them out of a meeting and told them that I was trying to hold things together and that I would appreciate it if they would stay.

It didn't take me long to figure out that the opposition to Enders weren't upset by the policy; it was more a problem of implementing it in the way they wanted to. So they had to shoot someone and they picked on Enders. They accused him of secretly developing a “two-track policy”; he didn't do anything of the kind. But “two-track policy” became a dirty phrase, although we had it established for years. We just didn't call it by that name. The phrase fell in disrepute.

What got Enders into trouble was that the “heavy breathers”—the hard liners—Ikl#, Menges—were suspicious of anyone who spoke with the known “enemy”. The Sandinistas were Communists—Cuban style. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that they were a leftist group that wanted to carry out, in their words “a revolution without frontiers”. It was an expansionist policy. We knew what they were all about. The hard-liners believed that you should not talk with the enemy, because if you talk to them, you give something away.



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So the thought of talking or negotiating with the Sandinistas—i.e the second track—was not acceptable and only raised the right's suspicions. Like all extreme groups— left or right —, this right wing had some paranoia about what Enders was discussing with the enemy when no one was around; he might give something away. It was that part of the “two track policy” that created problems; the other “track” of interdicting arms and putting pressure on was alright.

*Q: How does one deal with this?*

MOTLEY: For a political appointee who gets things done in the State Department, although the circumstances are not unique to that Department, it is only a question of time before someone whines about you being captured by the bureaucracy. This is the first sign that someone doesn't agree with what you are doing. The rationale becomes that you “have been captured by the bureaucracy” or you “have done this or that”. I dealt with it because I had good credentials with conservatives, including acceptable credentials with the extreme right. So I started from a base of “no suspicion”, unlike what some Foreign Service officer might experience. I was ideologically acceptable. That was helpful.

Later on, I got into some fights with some of the “heavy breathers” because I didn't agree with some of their assessments or their courses of actions. At that stage, I became estranged from the “heavy breathers”. I think that happens in every administration. I know people in the Carter administration who became estranged from his “crazies” on the left. Everyone has “crazies”; the only questions is whether they are their “crazies” or our “crazies”. Extremists all have the same characteristics: they are paranoid, they are suspicious, they have a “take no prisoners” attitude, there is no give in their positions which are usually dogmatic and ideologically driven and not in touch with reality. You may recall that in several administrations, the word “pragmatist” was almost spit out of the mouth of the hard-liners. Somehow they translated “pragmatism” as unpatriotic, etc. I saw leftist freaks in the Carter Administration who were equally as egregious and outrageous as some of the members of the Reagan Administration.



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*Q: When you became Assistant Secretary for ARA, did you set any goals for yourself?*

MOTLEY: No, I didn't have any specific goals. The appointment came on me so quickly, as I indicated, that I really didn't have time to think about it nor plan for it. One goal that I set for myself was the determination not to let, to the maximum extent possible, the Central America issue become a pejorative or adversarial factor in the 1984 Presidential election. I saw that as one of my principal missions. I reached this conclusion in early 1983, when there were already some doubts about President Reagan—there had been a disastrous trip to Europe, he had been shot, his popularity was on a down-slope. His re-election was not a cinch at that stage, even if it looked like it later. So that was a goal I set for myself. I was not going to let the Central America issue get out of hand to the point where it would be pejorative. I spent most of my time—too much time—on the Central America issues.

*Q: Before we discuss Central America, let's cover the rest of Latin America. First of all, Brazil: were there any particular problems with that country while you were Assistant Secretary?*

MOTLEY: No. As I was leaving Brasilia, we were about to engage them in a great dispute regarding their laws governing “informatics”—computers, telecommunications, etc. That was a real issue for us. Just after I left, Brazil became the subject of one of the first “301” cases which were so much in vogue in the '80s. “301” was a reference to a section of our Trade Law that provides authority to the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to declare, after some investigation, that a country was engaged in unfair trade practices and that some penalties could be assessed. The USTR was prosecutor, judge and jury. USTR would judge a country unfair, assess the cost to U.S. exporters of that unfairness and levy a comparable import duty on goods from that country. USTR threatened Korea with that 301 action; also Japan and some other countries.

*Q: Did the rain-forest issue arise during your term?*

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MOTLEY: No. There was a small beginning which came up during the consideration of a World Bank loan, but it was not a bilateral issue except that some members of the Senate—Bob Kasten (R-WI) especially—introduced some legislation that would have inhibited the U.S. ability to vote affirmatively on World Bank loans to Brazil. Of course, I had gone through the biggest environmental issue in America up to then—the Alaska land problem—and I knew the environmental crowd very well. But the Brazil problem was just beginning when I was Assistant Secretary.

*Q: What about Argentina?*

MOTLEY: In general, in Latin America, during the 1983-85 period, there was a re-democratization movement. While Assistant Secretary, I went to more inaugurations of democratically elected Presidents than any of my predecessors going back to 1948. It was an exciting time—a wave. We in the Administration took credit for it, although I must say that I did it somewhat with “tongue in cheek”. I was happy to take credit for it because if it had gone bad, we would have taken the blame. In fact, I am not convinced that we had that much influence. If you look at Latin American history, democratization is a cyclical phenomenon. It just happened that the cycles converged in Argentina and in Uruguay, in Brazil, in Peru, in Ecuador, and later in Chile. So we saw a wave of democracy sweeping the Continent. People would write tomes on it. I think a lot of it was cyclical.

Although each country will say that their experience is unique, there is no doubt that at least the press in one country is watching what is happening to their “brothers” in another country; that may lead them not to have as much revanchismo. These countries won't admit to any “domino” effect, but there is certainly a lot of looking at what is happening across the borders. Pretty soon, even someone like Pinochet feels the pressure. When military dictatorships in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay all of a sudden fall and are replaced by democratically elected Presidents, Pinochet begins to

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feel more isolated and that could have influenced him. I don't know that for sure, but it is certainly possible.

*Q: While you were Assistant Secretary, were we doing anything actively to encourage this process of democratization?*

MOTLEY: I would like to believe that during my tenure our support was less visible. Perhaps this was because I was born and raised in Latin America and I have seen the gringo from the other side of the street. None of my predecessors had that advantage. There is something called the “shadow of the gringo” . The United States throws a long and sometime deep shadow. It is the deepest in Mexico because that is the closest country. But the “shadow of the gringo” is projected which means psychologically if you say publicly that “the gringo wants it or wants it done” then the Latin American loses his machismo if he agrees. That is very true in Mexican politics. No Mexican politician has ever been elected to office by agreeing with the Yankees. That is just a fact of life. We shouldn't get upset about it, but we need to recognize that it exists. Perhaps I am more sensitive than most having watched it from the Latin American point of view. So I didn't, and no one else did either, go around beating our chests publicly, telling everyone how good we were. I think we are better off a lot of times making quiet inroads. The problem with that is that people accuse you of not really believing in democracy and human rights if you don't shout it from the roof tops. I don't agree with that. The shouting is self-aggrandizement and does not help to get the job done—if you agree with my thesis.

On the other hand, I know that there are countries in South America in which, on occasions, U.S. public pressure is seen as very useful by some Latin Americans—a sort of shining beacon in a stormy sea. So the issue of U.S. public involvement is not always black or white, but generally speaking, the U.S. can achieve its objectives better and smoother if “the shadow of the gringo” is not cast.

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*Q: But surely, you must have felt some pressure from the Administration's public relations and political operators.*

MOTLEY: I don't mind taking credit after the fact. Once it is announced that elections would be taking place in Argentina or Brazil, we could take credit. I participated in the publication of some pamphlets which showed on a map the growth of democracy in Latin America. I believe in that approach. But all of that is after the fact. My point is, and I part company with several people on this, that before the fact, public pronouncements are not necessarily beneficial. We can all be for democracy and human rights; it is like mom's apple pie. That is particularly true if you are tough somewhere else; you can balance it off with some benign policy at some other spot. There is always the tendency to support the 'good'; you are not necessarily effective by doing so publicly and loudly; in that way, you are more inclined to rub people's noses in it.

*Q: Argentina may have been on its way to democracy in any case; it was demoralized and rotten. But what about a place like Brazil?*

MOTLEY: I fought the people in Washington who wanted me to take visible stands on their democratization process. I know the Brazilian society. I knew what they were after. The press, like so many of its Latin counterparts, were thirsting for an opportunity to be offended; to write about "the shadow". I was determined right from Day One not to give them that opportunity. They have a word for their process called "abertura"—opening —, which was to lead the Brazilians to democracy. Everyone used the word; it was nice and fuzzy and warm, but no one could define it. They asked me, like everyone else, to define it. My answer was: "Abertura will be defined for Brazilians by Brazilians. We support the process". I refused despite the "freaks" from Washington to get engaged in a timing definition. People in Washington wanted to sound good and pontificate about it, although "abertura" was a local Brazil issue. There were a variety of different Assistant Secretaries, who didn't have any regional responsibilities, such as the human rights office, who felt compelled to make a statement every once in a while. I would in essence cut them off by

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telling them that I was the President's representative and telling them what I understood the current policy to be. If they disagreed with me, they could speak up; I just wasn't interested in a lot of free advice from people who didn't have adequate knowledge of the local scene.

*Q: May I ask you to discuss this issue a little more? I am referring to the differing points of view between the regional and functional offices.*

MOTLEY: The Department, through George Shultz' tenure—it may have changed by now —, was run by the regional bureaus. I may not be entirely objective on that statement because I was a regional assistant secretary, but I think most would agree that this was where the decision- making responsibility was, if someone wished to exercise it. The Department was structured that way. If you look at the organization of a regional bureau, it is a mini-State Department. Except for the Medical Division and the Bureau of Security, a regional bureau has all the other functions— public affairs, economic, political, administrative, finance, political-military, etc. I found that as a regional assistant secretary I could do things—mainly because I had a good bunch of guys who understood where I wanted to go—as I wanted. The Department is way behind on its communications- -way behind. It is almost now coming into the semaphore flag era. For example, I wanted to put a fax machine in Nicaragua. The Office of Communications wouldn't approve it for security reasons. I was given ten thousand reasons why it couldn't be done. I told my Executive Director to go buy one and put it in our Embassy in Managua. So we did and I got a nasty letter from the Office of Communications, which I ignored and that was the end of that debate. I wanted a fax because I didn't want someone to retype what was on the front page of the local newspaper and send it to me as a cable. That process would have gotten the article to me in six hours; I certainly didn't want to have it stamped “Urgent” when it was just a newspaper article. But I wanted to know what the press was saying and I wanted to know when it was published and not the next day. The fax was tailor made for that kind of communication.

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An assistant secretary, if he really wants to, can run operations in his area. At another time, I wanted a portable telephone. Again I was told that I couldn't have it. So we went out and bought the first one in the Department. It was a little walkie-talkie and I told the Executive Officer just to go out and buy it without arguing about it with other offices. I was on the Office of Communications' bad list again. But who cares? The point is that if you are a regional assistant secretary, if you want to run the operations in your area, you can.

The other functional bureaus that are key and with whom you normally have some differences, but usually in a more professional manner, are Politico-Military (PM), Intelligence and Research (INR), and Economic/Business (EB). Those are the three functional Bureaus that you deal with on a daily basis. There are others than can be useful or irritants as well, although on a lesser scale: International Organizations (IO), Human Rights (HA). Legal (L), Congressional Affairs (H), Administration (A). These can be more of an irritant.

The role of INR depends to a great extent on its stature. George Shultz enhanced it. Others have not. I had some familiarity with the intelligence community; I think I understand them better than most people. My background in the military was in intelligence work. I would always confront INR frontally and glad to do it (as Ambassador I did the same). INR would send one of its briefers to see me every morning. I would quiz the officer on different matters, not on an adversarial basis, but as a matter of interest. My attitude became known in the system, because it showed that I cared. I would write notes saying that I didn't agree with one assessment or another and ask for more information. So there was an interaction between INR and me. Where one can get into trouble in this kind of a situation is that each side begins to suspect that the other's assessment is driven by ideology and that always becomes a problem in any kind of intelligence analysis. Intelligence analysis is very subjective; it is very difficult to conduct it objectively. It is not a matter of counting whether there are ten or twelve tanks; that is easy. But intentions—what is on the mind of Daniel Ortega—become a very gray area. You have to be careful

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not to get into a situation where one side suspects that the other is driven by ideology. That was the situation between Frank McNeil and Elliott Abrams; each suspected the other to be motivated by ideology. Knowing both of them, I suspect that they were both correct. Frank is a very feisty guy; I have known him a long time. The way you deal with him is be straight up with him; if he gets feisty, you get feisty right back. You shouldn't be offended by him; sooner or later, you begin to communicate with him. He and I got along well; he did a superb job for me on the Grenada operation. We assigned him to it while his daughter was having some serious personal problems and while he was away on a sabbatical on a University campus. We told him we didn't care about his personal problems and sent him to the Caribbean for two weeks; he did a superb job and I knew we could count on him. I knew that I would get from Frank McNeil the unvarnished truth, just as I knew I would get from Tony Gillespie—another guy I knew I could count on. You always end up with guys you can depend on. McNeil was one of them.

*Q: How did you get along with the Office of Politico- Military Affairs?*

MOTLEY: I got along with each assistant Secretary who was there during my tour—there were two of them. I had a good personal relationship with Jonathan Howe— who was then a two star and now a four star admiral. He was followed by a major general, Jack Chain, who has just retired as a four star general head of the Strategic Air Command. I got along with both well. Jack and I were almost contemporaries in the Air Force. We knew the same people and outfits. Jonathan and I got along well for the same reason: our common military background. When the two Assistant Secretaries got along, we could settle any arguments. Both Jonathan and Jack had one senior guy whom I didn't like—it was a personal matter. I told them that I didn't want to deal with that guy; he irritated me and I spent fourteen hours a day in the office and I didn't need that. They agreed and he was kept away from me. That is an illustration of the kind of relationship I had with them.

*Q: During your term as Assistant Secretary, how did you perceive the relationship of our military to their Latin American counter-parts?*



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MOTLEY: I have always thought that over a period of years, the military-to-military relationships were the best that we had. They were the most consistent. They had a common goal—fighting communist subversion. That bond continued whether the American administration was Republican or Democrat. It survived changes in the Latin American governments. There was a continuity. One had to be careful not to let the military drive over-all policy. I viewed them as part of the glue of a government-to-government relationship, but you have to be careful that they wouldn't get you into trouble unwittingly or unknowingly by getting too close to some general who may not have been entirely savory. Of course, the U.S. military had some carrots like foreign military sales, although by the '80s it had decreased substantially. We had trained legions of Latins through our military school system in Panama. We ran hundreds of officers through there as well as thousands of enlisted men— in mechanics school, warehousing and supply schools in Panama—plus the War Colleges in the U.S. as well as the Inter-American Defense College. It was a system far more ample than any Fulbright or USIA/ IV (International Visitors) program in the world. It was a constant rubbing together of Latin and American cultures through the military. It was probably the biggest systemic influence that we had. You can go anywhere in Latin America and find graduates of one of our schools. The military had done an outstanding job from that point of view. This is a story that is not told very often because the lore of the foreign policy freaks is that somehow the military-to-military relationships lead to trouble, that they are not good and that they need to be watched. Those people forget some of the very fundamental explanations that the students get. A military man can explain to another military man what democracy is all about far better than a guy in a pin striped suit. The military man is much more credible.

*Q: Did you have any problems in any particular country with this military-to-military relationship?*

MOTLEY: I can't remember the specifics, but there were one or two rather enthusiastic military attach#s who came up on my radar screen when I was Assistant Secretary. So on

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one or two occasions, we had to talk to one of our Ambassadors and ask him to straighten out a problem with the Pentagon; if he didn't, I would have. On one occasion, I did get involved with one of the Service Chiefs, but it was more because both of us came across this problem at the same time. So we chatted about it and solved it.

Once we had problems with a CIA guy. We had an Ambassador who wasn't using good judgment either. We solved the problems by bringing both home sooner than they expected. That was a problem that Bill Casey, the CIA Director, and I solved together. We made the final arrangements by each pulling our respective guys.

*Q: Did you ever have to tell your Ambassadors that they had all the authority they needed and shouldn't bring their personnel problems to you?*

MOTLEY: That was my general approach. That is the way I wanted our Ambassadors to operate. I was there to help if needed, but I didn't want to do their job. In most cases, that occurred. When it didn't, it was usually because we had a weak or inept Ambassador. With 26 ambassadors, you were bound to have some problems. During my tenure, I was partly responsible for four Ambassadors coming home early. Two were political appointees and two were Foreign Service officers. In each case, the Ambassador just didn't measure up; the situation was sufficiently bad that they had to be brought home before the end of their tours instead of just letting them muddle through.

In one case, it was a matter of insubordination on a foreign policy issue. The Ambassador had totally disregarded both written and oral instructions. I just couldn't tolerate that. George Shultz was a willing ally, although I got a lot of thumb-sucking from the Seventh Floor including from the Deputy Secretary, Ken Dam. When Shultz agreed with me, that was the end of the debate. The Secretary told the White House and the President "accepted his resignation." Another case was also a question of insubordination, but it was more a managerial matter than a substantive one. The Ambassador thought that the President had given him a fiefdom instead of just being an Extra-ordinary

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Plenipotentiary representative, with certain responsibility to the American tax- payers and the U.S. Treasury. This guy just went off on his own and had to come home early. The third case had to do with an inability to lead and manage. The Ambassador got into a bad relationship with the head of the CIA office in his Embassy, demeaning for an Ambassador. He caused horrendous inter-agency problems over something that should not have happened. The last one was just an incompetent individual with whom I just thought we didn't need to put up with. There were guys who could do the job better, so we brought him home. There were a series of mistakes made and I finally got fed up. It is interesting because Ambassadors are the President's personal representatives; they are extraordinary and plenipotentiary. In protocol terms, they outrank everyone, but the President, when in the country of their assignment. In practical terms, the President delegates the day-to-day policy guidance to the Secretary of State, who in turns delegates that to the regional assistant secretaries. I wrote the Ambassador's efficiency rating. If you want to know who is someone's boss, find out who writes his efficiency rating. I wrote these reports on all 26 Ambassadors. George Shultz, who wrote my report, would look to me to make sure that the Ambassadors in Latin America managed their operations well. A couple of these guys had problems understanding that chain of command until they were on an airplane on their way back to Washington. But most understand the system and are happy to work in it. In a world of reasonable people, Washington exists to help the people in the field with their problems. In 95% of the cases, you are dealing with reasonable people. The balance are the incompetents or the misguided.

I found interesting that of the four whose performance I found unacceptable, they would be evenly split between Foreign Service officers and political appointees.

*Q: What recollections do you have about relationships with Chile?*

MOTLEY: Chile is one of neatest countries in Latin America. It is a wonderful place to do business from a commercial point of view. The people are delightful; the country is delightful. Southern Chile reminds me of Alaska. So I am really attracted to Chile. But

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during my term, I had trouble with Chile, primarily because Pinochet was such a hard-nose. It was in our interest to move him along; yet I was frustrated by what approach to take that would be successful. As I mentioned earlier, I don't think you can do it publicly with a guy like Pinochet.

The “shadow of the gringo” played both ways in Chile because Pinochet would say: “If you guys want me to do that, then I won't because I don't want to appear to be knuckling under”. The leftist opposition, who were the first to yell about the “shadow” were whining and complaining that we should put more pressure on Pinochet. Gabriel Valdez, who was an international gad-fly and head of the Christian Democrats, was always the first guy to storm the American Embassy to protest our policies in Central America or elsewhere—the typical menu of leftists. Then he would insist that we should beat on Pinochet. That was a good example of schizophrenic attitude toward the United States; so “the shadow of the gringo” cut both ways.

I found Pinochet a tough nut to handle. I have never articulated this before. Chile eventually came out of it after I had left State. Our Ambassador (Harry Barnes) and our Assistant Secretary (Elliott Abrams) were very forthright, but I didn't like some of the tactics they used. I thought they were of a nature that an American Ambassador should not use. Nor did I like some of the candidly gratuitous remarks and attitudes after it was all over in Chile that were taken by my successor and Barnes. Nevertheless, they deserved credit because they were in office when Chile deposed Pinochet. I found Chile a tough one to handle.

*Q: Were there any other areas of Latin America, exclusive of Central America, that presented particular problems while you were Assistant Secretary?*

MOTLEY: Drugs in Colombia. That was a difficult situation to deal with. The other generic issue was the debt issue, which hung all over Latin America. It was a tough set of facts.

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We had to pull our Ambassador out of Colombia three times because of drugs. That was for his own protection. The combination of leftist guerrillas and the narco-terrorists made an unholy alliance. That had an interesting start. The narco traficantes who operated in the rural areas had airfields set up. Coca paste would be flown in from Bolivia and other places, processed in labs and then flown out to the United States, via Mexico, Panama, the Caribbean—that was the whole network. The leftist guerrillas, long present in Colombia, also were strongest in the rural areas. The leftists told the narcos that they wouldn't mess with the labs if some protection money were paid. Money was nothing to the narco traficantes. So they paid the leftists money. Since the narco planes were coming back empty, they decided to load them up with weapons. Pretty soon, a potent marriage of convenience was formed. It was an anti-American coalition— the leftist for ideological reasons and the narco because we were trying to shut them down. The coalition has secure, portable radio communications that we couldn't intercept. At that point, the most powerful nation in the world didn't have the communication capability to protect its Ambassador, while our adversaries, who were trying to kill him, did! This was the situation that required us to pull the Ambassador out three times—on the third time, it was permanent— because we could not protect him. When we finally reached the point where we could protect him, the Embassy, and the staff, at work, at home and their transportation in bullet proof cars, the terrorists decided to focus on the school. That is the kind of guys you are dealing with. So the American businessmen got very antsy because their kids went to that school. They said they understood our plight but complained that we were causing them problems. It was then that I reluctantly evacuated all dependents out of Bogota. We did so reluctantly, but we had reached the stage when we couldn't protect our families. When we did that, they won and we lost. I am still convinced we did the right thing, the prudent thing, but it was a tough and bitter decision.

*Q: How was the Colombian government responding?*

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MOTLEY: It was overwhelmed. Over a period of time, the Colombian government has shown an incredible amount of courage. I don't have the exact figures as of today, but I think well over 150 judges had been assassinated; there have been thousands and thousands of policemen killed; eleven Cabinet officers have been killed. It is an incredible story and it continues today. I don't know how much longer that population can suffer such devastation. The Colombians do not get enough credit in the United States. We have no idea of the kind of pressures they are under.

*Q: What were your views of the Drug Enforcement Agency collaboration with the Department of State? Was it a problem?*

MOTLEY: It could have been, but I didn't have any problems in Brazil mainly because I spent time with them. The DEA agents felt they could come to me with their problems and I would try to solve them. I used the same principle with them that I used with all members of the Country Team; i.e. I was there to help them and go to the high levels in the Brazilian government if that would be helpful. But I also told them that I didn't want any surprises that would cause unhappiness. They were very good; I used to go out with them when they went with the Brazilian Federal police to their pistol target practices. I enjoyed that. It built some type of comradeship with them. So I didn't have any problems with DEA in Brazil. We ran several nifty little operations which worked well.

When I was Assistant Secretary, some Embassies would occasionally have problems with DEA. DEA would usually say that the Embassy didn't understand. The tensions were high in Bogota especially, where they got along well and didn't get along well. The death threats against DEA agents were incredible. On occasion, we would have to send one of the agents out of the country, but he didn't want to leave because it was a macho matter. But we wanted him out because it was obvious that he was being targeted and that unless he left, he would be killed.

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The Camarena story broke while I was Ambassador. Camarena was a DEA officer stationed in Mexico, in one of the smaller towns, who was captured, along with his driver or pilot, and then tortured terribly. I have listened to some of the tapes and they were horrible. Subsequently he was killed. Suspicion at the time, later confirmed, was that members of the Mexican government were involved in the kidnaping, the torture and the killing. These were members of the police and the military. It was a nasty and ugly situation which rightly outraged the DEA and the Ambassador and all of us. You can be outraged, but that doesn't lift the restraint and discipline that you must have as a public official. Our responsibility was to fix the problem and try to insure that it didn't recur. You don't have the luxury to stand at the wailing wall all day. Unfortunately, some senior members of the DEA fell into that trap and our Ambassador, Jack Galvin, also played that role to excess.

*Q: Tell us a little bit about the Grenada incident of October 1983?*

MOTLEY: I would like to consider Grenada as my operation. It was unique in several respects: it was the first successful use of force after a considerable period of time; second, that operation was initiated out of the State Department. Any of the records that you want to review—and reams of books are being written now by many people—have certain themes that run through them. One of those is that the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for understandable reasons, were dragged into that operation kicking and screaming. They wanted no part of it. The reason was that they didn't think that politicians and civilians should be involved in military issues. It was what was known as the “Vietnam syndrome”, which Desert Storm has now blown out of the water. But it was alive and well in 1983 and I understood it. The military did not want to get into a situation where the answers to “What am I here for? When am I going to get out?” were not clear to them. I understood that because I had spent ten years in the Air Force, partly during the Vietnam period, and therefore I understood fully what concerned Jack Vessey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Charlie Gabriel, the Chief of the Air Force staff and other senior officers. After



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all, I had served at the same time when they were colonels. It was not a lack of physical courage or lack of institutional courage, but the situation was just not clean or clear enough for them. Vietnam was just an absolute horror show for someone in uniform for a variety of reasons. So I appreciated their anxieties. They thought that Grenada was another one of these political schemes; yet over a period of time, we were able to show them that there was no other alternative; we had exhausted every other alternative.

There were inter-agency groups at the time for every area of the world. They were known as IGs and they operated at the Assistant Secretary level. As Assistant Secretary for American Republics Affairs, I ran all the IGs on Latin America and the Caribbean. The IGs included representatives of the Joint Chiefs, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council and the CIA. That was the small inter-core group. Depending on the issues, representatives from Commerce, Agriculture, USTR, Treasury would be added. But the small group met on Central America at least weekly, if not more often. So we were accustomed to working with each other.

As we were meeting once or twice a week, Grenada popped up on the radar screen. So we had an on-going built-in mechanism for planning, coordination, decision-making or for forwarding recommendations.

Grenada was a former British colony that had gone bad by October 1983. About eight years earlier, a government had taken power without an election, which was unusual in the British Commonwealth. That government was headed by Maurice Bishop, the charismatic head of what he called "The New Jewel" movement. He was an unelected Prime Minister of Grenada. Early in his stewardship, he had gone to the Cubans for assistance, which they readily provided to the extent that they had become the main source of economic and military assistance. The Caribbean is fundamentally a peaceful area. Most of the islands don't have armies. They have police forces. But the Cubans began to build a 10,000 foot long runway at the Grenada airport; much longer than would be necessary for the tourist trade. You could tell by the layout of the airfield that it was intended for military purposes;

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it had revetments, multiple fueling points. You can tell a military airport from a civilian one. It could have served the Cubans as a refueling point for their supply line to Africa, where they had thousands and thousands of troops. They could not fly non-stop from Cuba to Africa, which meant that they had to refuel in other countries which in turn meant that they couldn't use military planes per se, but had to use civilian planes for the transportation of troops and supplies. They would put the soldiers upstairs in civilian clothes and the weapons and the equipment in the cargo area. That was inconvenient. But from Grenada they could fly non-stop.

So that was one of the reasons for the construction of the runway. We suspected, and it was later confirmed, that the Cubans were playing a lot of games in Central and South America. So Grenada was an irritant to U.S. foreign policy. In about the middle of October, the twelfth or fourteenth, Maurice Bishop gets into a big fight with two of his leadership colleagues, Cord and Austin. They felt that Bishop was straying from the party line. The fight led to Bishop's arrest. The two others took over, but described their leadership as "not being the government". A curfew ensued; there was shooting into the air; the electric power was cut; etc. All this happened over a period of two weeks. Bishop was then released, although it is still not clear whether he was let out of jail or freed by a huge crowd of people who went to the prison. On the walk from the prison, Bishop and hundreds of others were shot; a state of martial law was instituted. The U.S. was requested to intervene by the neighboring Caribbean nations partly to protect 600 Americans who attended a medical school on Grenada. The government refused to allow U.S. consular officers to visit. When it finally agreed, the consular officers couldn't find anyone to deal with—there was no government. One of the first things a U.S. government representative has to do is to remind the host government of its obligation to protect all citizens, including U.S. citizens. That is rule number one. But there was no one to make that request to. No one would admit to being part of a government. We tried to get the students out; we chartered Pan American planes, but the Grenadians wouldn't let them land. There were some cruise boats in the Caribbean we chartered but the Grenadians wouldn't let the ship

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dock. Every effort, therefore, we made to protect our citizens was met with rebuffs. It was a show of chaos with ineptness. What bothered me was that this was the 18th month after the release of our hostages in Tehran, who had remained in Tehran for 444 days. My gut feeling, which George Shultz shared and which finally overcame the JCS's resistance, was telling me that Ronald Reagan would not stand still for another 444 days hostage episode. He probably would not have stood still for ten. I believed that if there was just even one U.S. hostage taken—and there were Grenadian guards around the campuses with “shoot on sight” orders—the President would instruct us to go get him or her and it would have been bloody and lives would be lost. I was looking for a 100% assurance of safety for the students. That was hard to get, but the question was; what was enough? Would a 75% assurance be enough? 85%? In my mind, that would not have been sufficient. We kept turning every stone to get 100% assurance, but could not get it. That is when the decision to take action was made.

*Q: You mentioned that the Joint Chiefs were very reluctant. But the Beirut attack on the Marines had not yet occurred.*

MOTLEY: That is right. The barracks were blown up the Saturday morning prior to Tuesday, 25th. By this time we had gotten the JCS to start the planning for an invasion; we had alerted the President and he had approved the contingency planning. There were big resupply ships on their way to Lebanon; after a big fight with the JCS, we got the ships to sail south first. That was a big fight. General Vessey, the JCS Chairman, said that he would not divert the ship without a written Presidential order. So we got that. This is just an illustration of the kind of assistance we were getting from the JCS. They didn't even want to plan.

There was no doubt that the military did not like being in Lebanon. This was even before the destruction of the Marine barracks. Part of the JCS' problem with the Grenada operation was that the questions of “why and when it would end” were not answered to JCS' satisfaction. During the time this was all going on, we met frequently with the JCS

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and they forced us to think through our plans and come up with a program of “In and out”. By doing so, we came up with the idea of finding Grenadians in the United States who could be brought to the islands to run an interim government. Frank McNeil was getting the Caribbean countries involved so that they would provide the peace-keeping force once we had rescued our students. All this was argued out in the planning stage. It is interesting to note that General Schwarzkopf, now the Commanding General of the coalition forces in the Middle East, was part of the Grenada operation and may have learned a lot of things of what not to do.

Grenada was a success because not one student was hurt. When the kids kissed the tarmac after their return from Grenada, the operation was over as far as I was concerned. I didn't care what Sam Donaldson said, I didn't care what Tip O'Neill said. America had seen it for what it was. The press tried their best to get the students to denigrate the operation, but they couldn't find anybody. It drove the press crazy. By the time, we went in, all our planning was done, including contingency plans for an interim government if needed. Our objectives were a) to rescue the American students from three different campuses, and b) to rescue the Governor General who was the link to the British Crown (the Queen is the head of State for all Commonwealth countries and the Governor General personifies her position as Head of State as opposed to head of Government)—he was being held incommunicado. The Foreign Service did a magnificent job in that operation. Not only Frank McNeil, who had been pulled from his sabbatical to put together the coalition, but also Tony Gillespie, who as Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Caribbean, did all the coordination and became our first Ambassador to Grenada. Grenada had been part of the Barbados' area of responsibility. After the successful operation, we established an Embassy in Grenada and Gillespie set all of that up. The reason for doing that was part of the package which would permit the U.S. military to withdraw quickly. Larry Rossen, another Foreign Service officer, was assigned as a liaison with the military—I had assigned a Foreign Service officer as liaison with every element of the military—the Marines, the Navy—Admiral Metcalf's command ship where Schwarzkopf was assigned—

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and the Rangers. Larry, because he knew the Governor General, went into Grenada with the “seals” to help rescue him. I wanted the Governor General, when confronted with these blackened camouflaged faces at three o'clock in the morning, to be able to see a face that he would recognize, who could also explain to him what was happening since he had been held incommunicado. So Rossen became the first Foreign Service officer to wade ashore with invading troops. There were several other Foreign Service officers who were involved.

*Q: Did we coordinate this operation with the British since Grenada was a member of the British Commonwealth?*

MOTLEY: We tried to, but ran into reluctance. We had a couple of problems: for one, our Ambassador in Barbados and the British High Commissioner did not get along—they were both at fault. The High Commissioner had married an American—second marriage for both—whose brother was the columnist Anthony Lewis. They shared the same political views. She was very vocal in Barbados in her anti-Reagan, anti-administration views. So the relationships between the Ambassador and the High Commissioner were not good.

Mrs. Thatcher vehemently opposed the operation. The British were the only ones we consulted before going in. We talked to a lot of others, but we never consulted them as we did the British. Mrs. Thatcher had two conversations with President Reagan, both initiated by him. Her opposition surprised him. It was 1983, two years after we did everything but go with the British into the Falklands. Our support of the British at that time cost us dearly in terms of our relationships with Latin America. We did it because Britain was a friend in need, a good ally. Then, two years later, we needed the British. President Reagan had trouble understanding why Mrs. Thatcher was so vehemently opposed when our students were at risk. We could never fully explain, but thought that there may have been two reasons: one) a week earlier, in that hurly burly atmosphere of the British House of Commons, Mrs. Thatcher had answered a question about her being “Ronald Reagan's poodle”. Secondly, I think there was a guilt complex because Grenada was a British Commonwealth country gone bad and we had to clean it up—she didn't like it.

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*Q: Did we ever tell the British that our students' lives were their responsibility?*

MOTLEY: No. It was not ultimately their responsibility. They may have been responsible for what happened, but it was not their responsibility to fix it per se. Even within the Commonwealth, the British have no obligation under law to protect U.S. citizens. We have that obligation; Ronald Reagan had that obligation. In fact, Mrs. Charles, the Prime Minister of Dominica and one of the leading political figures in the Caribbean who supported us, had approached the British and the French and was turned down by both. That was not publicly known at the time. I don't think that Mrs. Thatcher knew that we knew that she had been approached by Mrs. Charles. In fact, subsequently, Mrs. Thatcher denied that the British had been approached, but we knew that was not the case.

*Q: Had a comparable situation risen in Africa, I think the French would have reacted differently.*

MOTLEY: The French are much more cold blooded about situations of this nature. The British Ambassador in Washington was very helpful, in a professional sense. He wasn't straying from Mrs. Thatcher's policy, but he was able to give us a very detailed and scholarly precis on the relationship between the Crown, as represented by the Governor General and Grenada. That was important because the Governor General was the lynch pin; if he were not alive, the Constitutional authority would also have died. Although Bishop had torn up the Constitution and said that it no longer was applicable, nobody could answer the question of what then did apply. The "New Jewel" Movement was dead. So the question arose on how you get the thread of Constitutional government re-woven after a complete governmental break-down.

We had considered these issues before the invasion. I was not going to spend the rest of my life defending the vetoes of UN Security Council resolutions. So early on, Jim Michael, my principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—who as a Civil service employee had been the deputy Legal Advisor in the Department—headed up a task force composed of himself,

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another State Department lawyer, Josh Bolton—today the General Counsel of the USTR—a Justice Department lawyer and a DoD lawyer. This group examined the treaties of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization of East Caribbean States (OECS) and the United Nations (UN) and found the legal basis for the actions of the U.S. and the seven Caribbean countries that made up the OECS. It was because of their work that when Mrs. Charles came to us and asked for our assistance, we told her to put it in writing from the OECS, which she did. All of this was done quietly, but by the time the Rangers had parachuted in, we had in place full justification under all aspects of international law, all packaged. We had a structure of how to reconstitute the Grenadian government. We planned to rebuild the radio station and other infrastructures to assist the new civilian government to manage the affairs of its country. We had a peace-keeping force ready to follow after the Marines and the Rangers had finished their jobs. So we were fully prepared for the aftermath of the invasion. And it was done in a short period of time.

*Q: You said that we had the major share of the responsibility because it was our citizens who were at risk. What about the Caribbean countries?*

MOTLEY: We normally talk about the United States going in by itself and looking for other nations as a cover. In this case, that was a myth. Mrs. Charles was so in front of us that we had to hold her and her colleagues back. They wanted to move in sooner and that would have been a disaster. So we really had to hold them back.

*Q: Did our military appreciate all the post-combat planning that you had done? By the time the operation began, were they comfortable that they would get in and get out?*

MOTLEY: Yes, they were. They realized that all the spade work had been done. We had looked at every possible solution to bring the students out without resort to force. They were convinced that force was the only available alternative. They had become convinced after having participated in the intensive discussion that led up to the invasion.



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We worked directly with JCS and the Office of Secretary of DOD. The State's Bureau for Politico-Military Affairs was along for the ride. Admiral Jonathan Howe, who was the Pol-Mil Director at the time, was very good. He said that he was available if I needed help but he would not get in my way or that of my people. There couldn't have been a better relationship; the operation could not have succeeded if we had to work through Pol-Mil in our contacts with the Pentagon; it would have been too complicated. The responsibility was mine and Howe was very supportive. He gave me whoever I wanted from his staff to help out. But ARA ran the show.

The National Security Council guys were with us all the way. Bud McFarlane was brand new and was very supportive. He and Shultz were in Augusta with the President when a lot of the planning was going on. George Shultz gave me my head; he was my boss and knew exactly what I was doing. I was flying under his cover, so to speak. He was a wonderful boss in that respect; he had the guts to take the risk for letting his people do things which is the ultimate in management and leadership. It was always possible that someone would screw things up, but he was prepared to take that risk. So we had the support of McFarlane and the NSC. CIA supported us fully. I had no problems except with the JCS and Weinberger; the latter, who was more Catholic than the Pope in his reluctance to use force. But Jack Vessey, Art Munroe, Charlie Gabriel finally came around when they saw that there was no other option and that we had done our homework. Some say that there would never have been a Panama had there not been a Grenada and that there would not have been a "Desert Storm" had there not been a Panama. From a historical point of view that connection may be too early to make, but there is no question that there was a sea change in military thinking and what broke the Vietnam mold was Grenada.

*Q: Just as an aside. You gave us a glimpse of Casper Weinberger which suggests that he was a captive of his military officers.*

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MOTLEY: I am not suggesting that at all. He wanted to build up the U.S. forces, but didn't want to use them. I saw evidence in other situations which made it quite clear that he was not a captive. Weinberger had no Vietnam experience; so he didn't suffer from that syndrome. I mean I suffered from it; I knew what was going through the JCS' minds. That is why I worked with them.

I think we waited almost too long. I wanted to move on Sunday, but we waited till Tuesday. It was push and shove all the time. The military took forever to get organized. It could not move fast then.

The whole experience had a very salutary effect on the military. When it was all over, it went through an after-action analysis and found that they had done a lot of foolish things, that didn't work—coordination, equipment, doctrine, tactics. There were a lot of mistakes or misconceptions because of Grenada from a military point of view, but to their credit they went through very visible soul-searching analyses and learned a lot of lessons in a mature manner that other institutions would have a difficult time handling. They let it all hang out. They picked their experiences apart piece by piece and as result, they rewrote a lot of their doctrine and training. They tested their new approaches in Panama and found that a lot of things they did worked because it hadn't done so in Grenada. Of course, the Panama experience was basic to the success of “Desert Storm” which was on a much larger scale.

The fundamental difference between Grenada and Panama was that the former was a State Department led operation all the way. We pushed and screamed and shoved all the way. The military obviously had a key role as they went in harm's way. But we had people there on the ground ready to take over after the military engagement. Panama was a military operation of which State knew nothing. The reason I say that is because the radio station was not taken out right at the outset; that is the kind of target that the Foreign Service would have focused on right away. In the Grenada operation, we took out the radio station and brought our own transmitting equipment and were able therefore to broadcast what we wanted to right away. Furthermore, how can you let a 6'4" general in

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fatigues intimidate a man of the cloth—the Papal Nuncio? The image was just terrible. You don't allow that to happen and if you have a Foreign Service presence, those kind of things are not likely to happen.

Grenada was an example of how to plan an operation for all the post action activities and reactions. Panama was a superb military operation with no over-all plan or concept. That was the major difference between the two.

*Q: After the successful invasion, with no students killed, was there a lot of work to put things back together?*

MOTLEY: We had caused Grenada and therefore had to make it work. So we spent a lot of time and effort on three aspects. One, the economic recovery for which there is never enough money—after all, the Cubans had run it into the ground. When I visited two or three days after the landing, I looked at what looked like shell holes—just huge pot holes in the streets from the lack of maintenance. Second, the political system needed to be reinstituted. We had to go through a process defining parties and establish an election system. The Governor General was there and as head of government, ran the country, but we had to, within a period of time, get an election process going. Grenada was like every other Caribbean country—if you have six people discussing an issue, you'll have eight opinions. For eight or nine years, there had not been a party structure; so we had to reconstruct that. Third, we had to see that a trial of Cord and Austin, Bishop's murderers, was conducted according to the British system. This is where the British became very helpful.

Mrs. Thatcher never got over her petulance, but the Foreign Office cooperated very well. My counterpart in London had been my Ambassadorial colleague in Brazil. So we were able to work a lot of things out together.

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*Q: I would now like to turn your attention to U.S. relations with Mexico. How was it while you were Assistant Secretary?*

MOTLEY: The relationship with Mexico was, as it has always been, distorted by different subjects. In my time, those were drugs, Central America and illegal immigration. Our relationships with Mexico were driven by those three issues.

While I was Assistant Secretary, the Mexicans were deficient on all three. The Camarena incident, which I mentioned earlier, was a manifestation of the drug issue. There was a significant feeling within the Administration that parts of the Mexican government had been seriously corrupted by the drug traffickers. The Camarena incident led that corruption trail pretty high in the Mexican government.

The Central American issue was part of a total Mexican foreign policy which created an enormous amount of heart-burn especially among the “heavy breathers”. I found that policy, although I understood the rationale, very irritating. Those who didn't understand why the Mexicans acted the way they did were even more frustrated. Aside from the “shadow of the gringo”, the Mexican policy was driven by their perception that Central America was their back yard, not ours. They resent our being involved. It was just that simple. If you look at history, you will find that since the time of independence from Spain, Central America was a Captaincy-General domain, under the rule of Mexico. So they saw it as their back yard; it was not for us to meddle in. So whatever we wanted, they didn't. That is fundamental to understanding Mexico's views.

Another factor was domestic policy. The PRI, which is the only party that really exists, acts like the French Socialists. It gives to their leftists—the Mexican “heavy breathers”—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and lets them play with that area. The center and the right take business, commerce and labor and run the country. That is similar to the modus operandi of the French Socialists. So all the leftist freaks are running foreign affairs, in bed with Regis Debre, the French leftist Latin expert who was arrested for dealing with

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Che Guevara, and the Cubans and those ilk. So they are a constant source of irritation and place the Mexican foreign policy in conflict with us in the UN and on other issues. The Mexican Foreign Ministry, to the extent that it runs foreign policy, is a continuing pain for the U.S.

*Q: Were you able to sell your colleagues in the U.S. government on your views; namely that the Mexican Foreign Ministry was what it was and we should accept it and ignore it?*

MOTLEY: It was not that simple because not everybody is that reasonable. We tried to do that, but you can't always be successful because there were people who felt strongly about Central America and who didn't understand why the Mexicans couldn't come around to agree with us. Some were offended by some of the Mexican activities; they had to be calmed down periodically. So it was not that easy. Some in Washington maintained that Mexico's position on Central America was more important than U.S.-Mexican economic relationships. They thought those relationships should be forgotten. They saw the Central American communists at the U.S. borders. So there was a pull and shove constantly.

The Mexican economic position was also irritating. There was protectionism in both countries. Our investors in Mexico claimed that they were being discriminated against and some U.S. quarters were yelling for stricter border controls to keep out the Mexican workers.

Labor's position on this of course raised the third issue: illegal immigration. We didn't have time, while I was in State, to do what is being done today and that is a drive towards economic integration. De la Madrid, the former President of Mexico whom I liked, by the end of his tenure had done a lot to set the scene that Salinas is now playing. De la Madrid, in his pragmatic way, bit the economic adjustment bullet by taking orthodox economic steps such as forcing a recession to bring down inflation in order to give Salinas a better opportunity to start the process of an open North America market. I don't think he gets enough credit in the U.S. or in Mexico for his brave steps. I had a lot of respect for de la

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Madrid, I didn't have it for the Foreign Minister, Sepulveda, who was not a truthful man. He really irritated George Shultz when he, just flat out lied to us. I was in the room in New York and he just bold faced lied. It wasn't a diplomatic lie; he could not have justified it for having done so for his country; he just lied for the sake of lying. From that point on, Shultz dismissed Sepulveda as a credible interlocutor.

*Q: What were Reagan's views of the U.S.-Mexican relationships?*

MOTLEY: Reagan had a more realistic, healthier outlook towards Latin America than either Johnson or Kennedy.

*Q: What were your views of John Galvin, our Ambassador to Mexico? I have been told that he ran his Embassy with a small coterie of staff and that others had difficulty in seeing him.*

MOTLEY: I think that was right. Galvin was an acquaintance of the President. He was there when I became Assistant Secretary. At that time, I wasn't sure that our Embassy in Mexico City and my Bureau had "diplomatic relations". It was that bad. The people in the Embassy were prohibited from talking to anyone in the ARA Bureau; it was an unheard of situation. So when Jack came to Washington shortly after I took office, I sat down with him and I told him that we would re-establish relationships and I didn't give a damn about what problems he may have had with Enders; I wasn't interested in history, but I was interested in getting along with him and supporting him whenever I could.

Jack Galvin was a very interesting person. The rap on him about his "palace guard" was absolutely correct. Jack, as an actor, had been in the public eye for many years and had depended for those many years on public support, acceptance, adulation for both fiscal and psychic income. Actors by nature are not brought up in a management system; the most he may ever have managed was a business or press agent or perhaps vice-versa. I don't say this in a derogatory manner; it is just a fact. So you put him in charge of one of the larger Embassies in Latin America with perhaps the toughest country-to-country relationship in the region. I hadn't realized how difficult it was to manage that relationship

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until I became Assistant Secretary. One of the problems was that every agency in town was represented in Mexico City—Treasury, Agriculture, etc. I had the same thing in Brazil, but the difference was that these representatives—attach#s—worked for me in Brasilia and if they got out of line, I broke their fingers. In Mexico, each American Cabinet officer or sub-Cabinet official felt that this was his Embassy. So they tried to manage their attach#s directly from Washington. The Ambassador sits there with a discipline problem with seven different U.S. Cabinet officials; that is something no other Embassy faced—not even our Embassy in Ottawa. So it is a very difficult managerial chore and if you have an Ambassador who is not used to management, you will have the problems that we did. I told Jack that changing DCMs all the time, like underwear, was not going to solve his problems. The system would not support it and he was the laughing stock of the Department. I told him that we would send him a DCM—Morris Busby, a Foreign service officer who became Assistant Secretary for Terrorism and later Ambassador to Colombia—who was good. I told Jack he should keep him and make the Embassy work. I told him that this was his last shot; he had already gone through four. He couldn't keep changing DCMs. I had a long chat with Busby before he went out; I told him he had to take charge and tell the Ambassador when his pants were down.

*Q: And did you feel that worked?*

MOTLEY: Yes, to a certain degree. Busby was able to get in there, but a lot of the palace guard stuff continued. Jack is not unlike many of us; he has a certain amount of vanity—perhaps somewhat more than most people, who are not actors. That's understandable. That vanity would get in the way on how he would conduct himself at times, both with the Mexicans or with the government. Jack was difficult and a different Ambassador for an Assistant Secretary to manage. I happened to like Jack personally, but he was a different challenge. You had to deal with a big ego; if you decide to deal with a big ego, that is an entirely different case.

*Q: How do you deal with a big ego?*



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MOTLEY: The first fifteen minutes of our meetings would be devoted to me telling him how terribly the Mexicans had been treating him and how he was standing up to it very well and that he shouldn't let them get under his skin, which they were doing. I just kind of puffed him up and made him feel good. Then I would get down to the substantive issues.

With a Dean Hinton, you didn't have to spend those fifteen minutes. You got right to the issues and went on. If you tried to puff up Hinton, he would probably hit you in the face. I am not trying here to draw a parallel between a career officer and a political appointee, but these were two men who reacted entirely differently. If you decide you have to work with a person with an ego problem, you have to massage and stroke him or her. Then you have situation in which you can deal with the individual. One time, I sent Gavin a note to suggest how something might be done, He didn't respond, so I assumed it would be done. It turned out that he did things 180 degrees opposite. So I sent him a "back channel"—a message sent through a private communications system—in which I told him in essence that he had obviously not understood what I wanted done and that he was to proceed as I instructed him, in a 1, 2, 3 fashion. And I wanted it done that day. He took great offense at that as I found out from Busby. So I called him and said that he should not take great offense; I pointed out that if I had sent to him through normal State channels where many could read it, then he could take offense. He understood that; he knew that I was not trying to rub his nose in it, but that I was just trying to make sure that something would be done. He was just stubborn. But I don't want to make too much out of it. I think a lot of successful people in the world have egos. I would draw one parallel between Jack Gavin and Henry Kissinger, which I believe to be true: both of them have an ego that is a mile high and a self-confidence that was razor thin. After that they probably had nothing in common. One was short and fat and the other tall and handsome.

*Q: I assume that one of the reasons that you were able to exert your influence is because Gavin was an "acquaintance of the President's," as you have said, and not a "friend".*

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MOTLEY: I picked that up from Deaver and Baker in the White House. They were mumbling about how Gavin was throwing the President's name around when Reagan didn't even really know who he was. Those two guys understood relationships. But I let Jack get away with a lot of stuff which was important to him and not to me. That was the price of the President-Gavin relationship; I was not interested enough to go the mat with Gavin; it wasn't that great a problem. There were a lot of things that were important to his ego that I just ignored, such as his insistence on riding in specific limousines, etc. That kind of stuff doesn't bother me, but when it came down to deciding on courses of action and if he wanted to stare me down, I would take him on and insist on my way. He understood that when it counted, I would be there.

*Q: Were you able to repair the very important lines between the “desk” and the Embassy?*

MOTLEY: Yes, because the “desk” officer (office Director) had been my DCM in Brazil—George High—and then had been assigned to Mexico City as Gavin's DCM. I had urged Jack to take George because he was an outstanding officer, who was dependable and could make an Embassy function. Unfortunately, the two didn't get along and George had a short tour in Mexico, but came to Washington to head up the Mexican “desk”. There was no animosity between the two; the chemistry between just hadn't worked. I told Gavin if he didn't trust George in the job, he would get somebody else. Jack said ok and then the “desk” worked the way it should, just like the other thirty-two “desks” on the bureau. I told Gavin that it had to work and that he and I would have to make it work.

*Q: That raises the question of your opinion of your staff when you took over in ARA?*

MOTLEY: ARA had always been perceived as a “back- water”. East-West relationships have governed our foreign policy since the end of World War II. ARA was only established in the early '40s with Rockefeller as its first chief. So EUR attracted all the real “chargers”—the good political officers. They dealt there with white people that spoke English. There is an unspoken, unwritten racism that flows not only through the

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Department of State, but how we all think. So Latin America was the “banana Republics”. Over the years, there were some great Latinists who came through ARA, including political appointees like Lincoln Gordon, and FSOs such as Harry Shlaudeman, and George Landau. There is a whole series of people. But ARA was not in the forefront. Name me one Career Ambassador who is or was a Latinist! You can't unless you name Dean Hinton, who is not really a Latinist. My point is that the true path to Heaven in the Foreign Service is EUR and perhaps at times, the Middle East and occasionally, the Far East. That means ARA attracts only people that like Latin America. That didn't bother me because when I took it over, ARA was the hottest Bureau in the Department. It was the crap game in town. There was more attention focused on Latin American issues than any other, except maybe cruise missiles or a bomb here and there. I had three wars going at once; it was jumping all the time and I didn't have time to think about it being a back-water.

*Q: Let's turn to Central America. You became Assistant Secretary in 1983 and stayed until 1985. What was the situation when you first became Assistant Secretary?*

MOTLEY: I saw one of my missions as not to let Central America become an adversarial or pejorative 1984 campaign issue. That was clear; no one wrote that down for me, but it was obvious to me that that was one of the reasons I had been put in the job. I was probably the first guy in that job who spoke both Spanish and Portuguese and who had visited virtually every country in the area prior to becoming Assistant Secretary. I don't consider myself being a great Latinist—Harry Shlaudeman has forgotten more that I will ever know, but I had been around the region. Furthermore, I understood domestic politics. Those were the two elements that put me in the job.

So the first mission was to keep the issue out of the 1984 campaign. Also I saw the issue from a tactical point of view as opposed to strategic because I felt that our position was unpopular. I never understood how or why it got so unpopular. I agreed with the objectives of our position, but I recognized it as unpopular, although, as I said, I don't understand

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why it was so. It is very difficult to sustain a policy over a period of time if it doesn't have popular support.

Therefore, I took a tactical view of the problem. What I saw was that America's perception of Central America was framed by two “do not wants”: on the one hand, it was “ We don't want another Cuba on our mainland”—communism, hammer and sickle, etc—; and the other was “We don't want another Vietnam”—the spectrum of Americans in rice paddies and jungles without a specific goal in mind that would permit one to see the end. Our policies had to fit between these two popular perspectives. There wasn't a lot of latitude for us; you could conjure up all kinds of wonderful schemes that may have looked good in books and sounded good from an academic point of view, but they were beyond the perimeters of the two limitations. There was no use considering anything that didn't fall within those two popular sentiments; one side or another in American would not allow anything beyond these parameters. So that is the way the policy had to be run. I took a very practical, pragmatic approach.

What did the limitations mean? One, that we would not use U.S. troops. Secondly, we would tolerate, even though distastefully, people like the Contras—even the word was wrong because they happen to be on our side in Nicaragua. Americans really didn't want to understand about nasty, dirty wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua fought by those brown people who spoke another language and did nasty things to each other—the hell with them. But the establishment Churches worked those vineyards like nothing I had seen before and did a very impressive job persuading Americans about the Central America situation, at least as they saw it.

The limitation put on our policies meant that we would have just more of the same: supporting the Contras, bullying, pushing and shoving and hoping that there would be an internal collapse which would throw out the Sandinistas who were the source of the whole problem in Central America. When Shultz and Enders consciously turned the country's attention away from El Salvador to Nicaragua, they were absolutely correct because that

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is where the problem was. Therefore, all we did was play for breaks in a tactical sense; you pushed and shoved and hoped that something would go your way. We put economic sections on, we supported the Contras, we took diplomatic and non-diplomatic motions — anything to keep the pressure on without getting directly, militarily involved. It was a tactical game, as I saw it. It was never articulated; you can't write articles for *Foreign Affairs Quarterly*, on that because it doesn't have an academic tone, but it was a practical approach. The end game was to prevent the consolidation of the Sandinistas regime. It took six years, but in the final analysis it worked. But it was not a policy which could be measured precisely; you couldn't set time deadlines by which certain objectives would be achieved. The policy did not lend itself to a timetable. But we knew that sometime in the future, as it did, the Sandinistas would be removed from office.

*Q: How did the professional Foreign Service establishment go along with your tactics?*

MOTLEY: The majority of the professionals understood it and accepted it. There were some who were unhappy because there was no end-game, but that was primarily from the Seventh Floor people who never got their fingers dirty and don't understand what is going on— the headquarter's “weenie” type. They were essentially irritants; I didn't have any problems within the Department. The Secretary would evidence a frustration from time to time, but he was very good to me and took a lot of interest. He understood the tactics better than most. He probably had a more strategic view than I did, but he understood what we were trying to accomplish.

The problems within the administration came from outside the Department—from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, from Bill Casey and a couple of others in CIA, from the White House and the National Security Council—all from the “heavy breathers”. In the Congress, we got shot at both from the right and the left, making our Congressional relations an absolute zoo. I didn't mind getting shot at, but it is tough to develop and maintain a coherent and consistent policy when you are fighting off the right at one second

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and the left in the next. When you get between the Jesse Helms and the Chris Dodds of the world, it kind of zeroes out any coherence.

*Q: Why did the Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger, take an interest?*

MOTLEY: Defense didn't want to use American troops; at least that was their public position. Secretly, they did want to use force, but didn't have the guts to say so. That was the interesting thing about the "heavy breathers" in DOD—this comment does not include Cap. But these were the views of some of the people who worked for Cap and who tried to influence him. It was a contradiction in their views; one the one hand, they wanted the U.S. to be rough and tough and wanted to overthrow the Sandinistas— with which I might well have agreed with since I have no compulsion about over-throwing a government if it were in the interest of the United States. That in my mind doesn't make me immoral because there are situations in which it is in the interest of the US, to topple another government — Saddam Hussein is a great example. But I knew that using American troops would go beyond the limits of the American popular will. I used to go through this argument with those guys because they would never articulate support for the use of U.S. troops. They would talk about "democracy", etc., but they didn't really believe it. They just wanted to overthrow Ortega. One day, I asked General Gorman to do an analysis of what it would take to invade Nicaragua. He had already done it, so he answered promptly: "125-150 thousand troops; four to six weeks; we will suffer 4-6,000 casualties; and once we are there, we will occupy and not liberate". And this was in the post-Grenada period when everybody was feeling their oats. So I would say to them: "Do you think that American will stand still, in of light what they already think about Central America and the Church and so on, for six solid weeks of nightly news of soldiers slogging through the jungles of Nicaragua?". Of course, there was no argument. They would say it is not in our best interest to leave Ortega in power to which I would point out that the American public would never support such an operation. An American invasion was destined to be a disaster at home.

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On the other side, people would say that they didn't want the Sandinistas to expand their revolution, but when reminded of what the Sandinistas had said about their ambitions, the left would say that they didn't really mean it. So we would get into that kind of argument. These people were misguided. The Church people were the ones that were really irritating. They had a guilt complex along with the modern "liberation" theology. I tell my Catholic priest friends at Georgetown that they should be concentrating on my daughter's first Communion and Confirmation and not on political aspects and what our government should or should not do. If they wanted to become involved in the political process, they should have taken their collars off and run for office. That would drive them through the roof. But I insisted that that was their job; they had a religious role to play and not to foment and incite opposition to American policy. That was not in their job description.

There was one nun, a Maryknoll, and Tip O'Neill's chief foreign policy advisor, who was a sister of a person close to O'Neill's family. She lived in Managua. She was an absolute captive—an agent of influence—of the communist Sandinistas. They provided her with a car, rationing for gasoline which permitted her to go wherever she wanted. She took it all and then would feed O'Neill with stories of how terrible we were. He would swallow it. It was absolutely, totally stunning. Why did the nun act the way she did? Another Maryknoll nun told me and I understood that they meant to do well by helping the poor, but I didn't understand how they could be duped by the Sandinistas, who were killers and Godless. She said that when you live in the countryside and live with the poor under dictatorial regimes, you sometimes reach the conclusion that the opposition just might be better. The nuns saw the Sandinistas as a possibly better alternative to something that was just unacceptable.

*Q: How were your relationships with William Casey and the CIA?*

MOTLEY: I got along with Casey and communicated very well with him. I don't have any problems with covert actions if the operation falls within the American guidelines—that is, if you have a "finding" which is a written authorization for an operation with all the whys

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and wherefore in it approved by the President and briefed in secret to the appropriate Congressional Committees. The Committees have ways of stopping these operations if they disagree with them, usually through fiscal procedures and others. The Committees are not asked for an approval, but have the necessary means to stop them if they so wish. That process is carefully designed not to make the members of Congress accountable, because they don't like to be held responsible. So they are told about the operations, but must take a negative action if they really disapprove. There were occasions when we took "findings" to them with which they disagreed and then we would stop them. But the process works well.

There is another aspect to these operations. If a Nicaraguan wants to fight for his country even at the risk of his life, I thought we should give him the wherewithal to do that. It is far preferable to sending an American soldier to do it. That is a purely calculating point of view, but I prefer it.

*Q: How were the Contras doing when you became Assistant Secretary?*

MOTLEY: I went through an interesting point in American history; I lived through the first covert action that came out of the closet one limb at a time. The U.S. funding of the whole Contra operation was beginning to become public. That was first time in history that ever happened. It was very slow in the way it came out. It was agonizing. It was a terrible atmosphere for running a policy when our activities become public a bit at a time; that makes it neither fully public nor fully covert. Everybody else could talk about it, but I couldn't. It was just another part of the zoo.

The operation was started before I was in office. I was not under the illusion, as were some, that the Contras within my tenure as Assistant Secretary would be marching through downtown Managua. I didn't see a quick end to the conflict. But that didn't mean that I didn't think the Contras were very useful; they were, because they set out to achieve very fundamental objectives: the stopping of arms supplies by the Sandinistas to rebel



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groups in other countries—El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras. There was no doubt in my mind—I had enough empirical evidence. But we had trouble with the “smoking gun” for U.S. TV which didn't want to believe the facts. I was totally convinced that the Sandinistas were fueling the fires in their neighboring countries. I wanted the Sandinistas to be totally consummated with the Contra problem so that they wouldn't have time for anything else. And that in essence is what happened. The pressures that the Contras, with our support, were able to bring to bear in addition to our efforts to interdict the arms flow by using high tech, did the job. Of course, in the interdiction effort you need more than high-tech; the arms were carried by mules over high mountain tops. People don't understand that smuggling has been going on in Central America for centuries and if it wasn't wrist watches or Scotch whiskey or drugs, then it was guns. They had been doing that for years. It was not an ideological issue for the smugglers; that was their business. We had to stop that and the Contras were a very useful instrument for doing that.

The Contras were also useful in forcing the Sandinistas to turn inward. They had to worry about their own economy. I was trying to bring the Sandinistas to their knees; that meant economic sanctions, the Contras, etc.—every tool available in the box that I could use.

*Q: What brought on the mining of the Corinto Harbor?*

MOTLEY: It was a great idea until it went public; then it became a terrible idea. Oil was the largest Nicaraguan import; 90% of the oil came through Corinto Harbor. A lot of the oil was provided by Mexico. The Soviets provided very little, but they did ship billions of dollars worth of arms. If we could do something that would make shipping into Corinto Harbor a dangerous practice; if Lloyds of London would refuse to issue insurance for ships going to that harbor; then normal oil deliveries would cease. That would force either the Soviets to put their tankers at risk and increase their supply efforts or the Sandinistas would have an oil shortage. We would have won in either case. If you can force a very visible Soviet presence, that would increase U.S. support; if the Soviets didn't increase assistance, then you increase the pressure on the Sandinistas. We didn't want to kill anybody; we just

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wanted to scare the underwriters at Lloyds. The targeting of an insurance company was a novel approach, but made very good sense. The only mines that were available to us were U.S. navy mines that were too large; they were intended to sink ships. So we had to construct special mines which were built in a garage in Northern Virginia. These mines were supposed to make a big bang and scare everyone, but not kill. That is exactly what happened. In the "Naval Proceedings" there is a long article written by a Navy Captain who called it the most successful mining operation in naval history because it achieved its objectives fully. It shut down Nicaraguan imports.

But from a policy point of view, it went wrong when it became public that the U.S. government was doing the mining itself. Why people perceived it as being different from supplying the Contras, I don't know. Under the law, a "finding" was necessary to authorize the operation. We wrote such a "finding" and took it to the President. He agreed. We took it to the Senate Intelligence Committee and briefed it. Same with the House Intelligence Committee. There were some rumbles, but they didn't take any negative action. A member of the House, who is now a U.S. Senator, came out of the secret briefing; disclosed the briefing to a "Wall Street Journal" reporter—David Rogers—even though under the law, intelligence briefings were secret and therefore not to be discussed outside the Committee room. Rogers, who is a good friend, wrote the story and that is how it broke in the press. Then everybody began to back away from it. In three or four days, I had a sea of guys say to me: "How did a decision like this get made?". When one particular official asked that question, I told him: "You son of a bitch, you sat right there with me when we briefed the President and you recommended approval. What do you mean, how do decisions like this get made?". That particular interlocutor was not George Shultz.

The mining idea was not mine, but I thought it was ingenious. It went to what we wanted to get done, it was well executed; it turned absolutely sour when it was exposed to the light of day. Many think that this one operation was instrumental in losing Congressional support for the Contras later. Who knows?

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*Q: As a practical measure, all of these mines appear in a harbor in Central America. It was well known that we didn't like the Nicaragua regime. We wanted the mining to be public knowledge so that Lloyds would refuse to give insurance or raise the rates so high to make shipping uneconomic. How, as a practical matter, could it have worked?*

MOTLEY: Prior to the Rogers' disclosure, we had a very good and credible story that held that the Contras were conducting the operation. The Contras were taking credit for it even when Managua was blaming the U.S. We would answer by saying that the Nicaraguans always said that. We were very careful not to have any U.S. person inside the territorial waters; the operation was conducted by third country nationals. We had plausible deniability until a sworn official of the U.S. Congress broke the law.

*Q: Were any sanctions applied to the then U.S. Congressman, now U.S. Senator?*

MOTLEY: No, because the FBI is absolutely gutless when it comes to investigating Congress. It would not have anything to do with the incident. It is a shame, but it is a matter of fact. The FBI cherishes its relationship with Congress, going back to the J. Edgar Hoover days; it is a "good old boy" type of relationship. I have another example. There was a Congressman who traveled a lot. I don't agree with his policies, but he is a credible and hard working spokesman for his point of view. He traveled to Central America and wanted from the Department some cables about his previous trips. They were classified, including up to secret. That's no problem because there is a process of sending such material as they relate to his trips to the Hill. On other documents, there were negotiations, but on cables on his trip, we had no problems and provided them. The Congressman leaves on his trip. One Saturday morning, I get a call in the office from the FBI reporting that it had found documents from my office in a suitcase in a baggage carousel in the Los Angeles airport. The documents were those that we had provided the Congressman. His staff assistant had taken them home—violation number 1. He had put them in a suitcase that had been checked—violation number 2. That suitcase was going overseas—violation number 3. These are serious, serious security violations. The bag didn't go to

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Guatemala, it went to Los Angeles. It went round and round on the carousel and finally the DEA became suspicious. So they opened the bag and find the classified messages. So they called the FBI; the FBI looks at the “authorizing officer's” name and they called me. Had that been a Foreign Service officer who had put the documents in a suitcase, I can guarantee you that the minimum penalty he would have received would have been thirty days without pay. All we got from the Congressman was accusations that we were trying to persecute his assistant. The FBI backed off when I told them that they should conduct the investigation and the prosecution. But the FBI said since there was no disclosure, it was all right. That was their answer; it was disgraceful. You asked me what happened to the Congressman who spoke to Rogers; nothing, even though he did a serious disservice to America.

*Q: Did you have problems with congressional staffs on the Central America policy?*

MOTLEY: I did, but not to the extent that they exerted their muscle as was the case during the periods of some of my successors. I had problems with those from the fringe right and the fringe left. I have examples of both kinds, in essence breaking the law. In one case, which involved a member of the left, when I brought the violation to the attention of his Senator, whom I greatly admired and respected, the matter was taken care of immediately. He stopped what his staffer was doing, which was essentially giving information to the guerrillas in El Salvador about some of our plans. I am not sure that it was necessarily classified information, but if you can confirm what people are thinking that is a very valuable piece of information. We found out about it because the Salvadorans were monitoring the telephones and when they came across the conversations that the staffer was having with the rebels they made them available to me. So I went to the Senator whom I respected; had I not, I would have gone public. The Senator, even though of a differing point of view, was horrified—he was a very thoughtful guy who would never have permitted that sort of thing. He just didn't operate that way. Some others didn't quite have the same moral standing.

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*Q: Do you share the concern of many that the Congressional staff has become a power all unto itself?*

MOTLEY: No doubt about that. Of course, I had been exposed to Congress in earlier years. So I understood the system. There are 25,000 staffers that have a right to a telephone. That doesn't include the guards, the service personnel, the mailroom, etc. They support 535 members of Congress. Most of them are fairly bright. They work in terrible conditions. OSHA (the Office of Safety and Health Administration) would shut the offices down if they had jurisdiction. Some of these staffers ride ideological hobbyhorses, right or left. They are allowed to ride these horses because their bosses have too much on their own plates and can't supervise their staffs. Congress wants too many things, and sinks in the mire of the myriad of material it has requested. At the same time, it doesn't do what it ought to do. The net result is that the staffers are all over the place; some are loose cannons on both sides of the fence. I didn't deal with them, even when it was difficult, but let my Deputies handle them. I dealt with the Members; if you deal with the staffers, they will drag you down to their level.

One day, I found myself talking to a couple of Senators and three or four of their staffers. One Senator had to leave, but his staffer wanted to continue the ideological discussion. I wasn't interested in arguing. I was already working 80 hours per week. I don't owe this guy anything. So I told the Senator that if he wanted to talk, I'd be pleased to talk to him, but I didn't have time to sit there and argue with his staffer. That kind of startled him. I explained to him that I had a job to do which did not include satisfying his staffer's ideological hobby horse. The Senator understood that and so I left when he did. You just have to draw the line, but it also means that somewhere along the chain, some one has to talk to the staffer. You have to make a record which shows that you are playing straight with them. They play by a different set of rules in Congress; it is sort of "gloves off". They will make statements which they can't support; that is because Congress is used to playing offense; they never play defense and if they have to, they don't play it very well. Just look at Jim

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Wright. Jim Wright came under attack and he caved. He didn't know how to handle it. Congressmen, by nature, are like attack dogs. They are just like the press to a certain extent. They know how to attack, but not to defend. So they get out and make assertions forcing the administration to play defense. Actually, an administration plays both offense and defense, but Congress doesn't. So you have to be careful with them. On occasion, dogma and ideology drive out certain elements of intellectual honesty on the part of certain staffers and members. Foreign Service officers have to be careful; their careers could be ruined by one of these people. There are a couple of officers today whose nominations for Ambassadorships are being held up because of fights with Senators and their staffers. It is an absolute disgrace that the Administration doesn't insist. George Bush or any President should just tell the Senators that these are his nominees and that he demands an up-or-down vote. That would stop these disgraceful delaying tactics.

*Q: What comments do you have about our relationships with El Salvador?*

MOTLEY: By the time I assumed office, some of the more obnoxious members of the government had departed. The acting President was Magania who was a wonderful man. He set the climate for the free elections that brought Duarte to power. The elements of the military, the so-called "death squads", were still active. It was part of what I call the "private, quiet aspect". George Bush as Vice President did one of the most magnificent jobs that I have ever seen in this case. It is very easy to hide behind the Congress in dealing with these governments. An administration official can always say that he would like to be helpful, but that Congress would not vote the money. That is very easy to hide behind. I don't agree with the tactic, but I have seen it happen. In 1984, while George Bush was planning a trip to South America, he asked his staff about stopping in El Salvador on the way back. So I went to see him, to talk to him directly. I told him that from his point of view, it would be a high risk stop. I told him about the "death squads" and pointed out that the press would ask him what the Administration was doing about their lamentable activities. If he hadn't been able to do something about it, the press would say that he had failed. So I had concluded that, from his personal point of view, it was a high risk stop. He

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asked me whether he could do anything about the situation if he were in Salvador. I said that he could talk to them. He decided he wanted to do that, which surprised me a little.

He did stop in El Salvador and gave the most formidable performance. This was old “wimpy” George Bush lecturing to a roomful of the top Colonels. The President introduced him and then left the room. Bush, Pickering, then our Ambassador, myself and a nervous American security officer—the Colonels all had side arms—Vida Casanova, the Minister of Defense and the roomful of Colonels. All the usual suspects were there. Bush in his private, quiet way, just told them the facts. He said he would not hide behind the Congress, and that Reagan himself could not and would not support them unless they cleaned up their acts. He told them they would have to stop their terrorist activities immediately; if there were any more incidents, Reagan and he would walk away from El Salvador, even though they would grieve while doing it. He told the Colonels that the activities were not in their best interests; they represented a disciplined force and should be able to control themselves and their men. The “Question and Answer” session was a little rough. They said that they had been in office for only six months, that the stories may be exaggerated; that the Americans were making life tough for them while the Salvadorans were fighting communism. Bush told them that regardless of their arguments, they had been put on notice that the American administration could not tolerate any more incidents. The story of that meeting never surfaced; no one ran out to brief the press because it was important to get that message across privately if it were to be credible. Bush was prepared to do that. If the “Washington Post” had headlined that meeting, the macho-ism of those Colonels would have been challenged and the meeting would have had the opposite effect. In any case, Bush's performance was formidable and it showed that you can be very effective if you can do things behind the scenes. The fact that this was going to be a private meeting was decided ahead of time and that there wouldn't be any “photo ops”.

*Q: Were you involved with George Bush and the Panamanian issue?*



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MOTLEY: Yes, I met one time with Bush and Noriega in Panama. It was in a formal setting—the Panamanian Presidential Inauguration. I believe that a lot of the stories about Bush and Noriega go back to when the President was head of the CIA. The story that he apparently personally recruited Noriega is a lot of hogwash. He didn't have anymore idea about Noriega being a paid CIA informer than he did of any of the other thousands who were on the same payroll. It was a bad rap.

*Q: During the 1983-85 period, how did we view Panama?*

MOTLEY: Anybody that had ever dealt with Noriega must have washed his hands after the meeting. Noriega was just not a nice person. In 1985, I did not see any evidence of Noriega's involvement in drugs. There were some suspicions, but then everybody was under suspicion for drug trafficking at the time. The biggest rap that we had against Noriega was that we knew he was playing games with the Cubans. But we always felt smarter than the Cubans. The intelligence community believed that they were getting enough from Noriega to overlook his ties to Cuba. The drug issue when I left was not evident. There was vague chatter, but no evidence.

*Q: During your stewardship, how was Cuba perceived?*

MOTLEY: I found that the Cuban Foreign Office was very skillful. Their representatives in multi-lateral fora were very skilled—we had to work hard to get around them. Their intelligence services were excellent—very professional and tough. They were very good at subversion, both overt and covert overseas. They manned their Embassies with cultural attach#s who were intelligence agents. They fomented strikes and riots. They were very good at that. In that sense, they were a threat to the United States. I thought Castro was on the down-side of his life; that was five years ago and he's still going strong.

In 1984, after the elections, I went to George Shultz and suggested that if Richard Nixon was the only person who could go to China, than maybe Ronald Reagan was the only



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person who could go to Cuba. Shultz was sort of intrigued by the idea. He asked me what I had in mind. I didn't have any concrete suggestions, but I was just suggesting a new initiative. He asked me to work on it. So I did and brought together a couple of trusted aides, including some Foreign Service officers, and we brain-stormed the idea. We examined the possibility and although we agreed that it would be feasible, I came to the conclusion that it would never get a fair hearing from Ronald Reagan, because some of the people around him, in addition to his innate biases, would have instinctively turned it down. If I had had an opportunity to talk to Reagan on a one-to-one basis, I think that, over a period of time, I could have convinced him that history would have looked favorably upon such an initiative. But without that preparation over a period of time, we would have bloodied ourselves and have been accused of not being loyal Americans, and wishing to deal with the enemy, etc. So I came to the conclusion that it wouldn't work. About that time, George Shultz asked me how the work on my idea was coming along. He had kind of warmed up to it. So now I found myself trying to talk Shultz out of an idea that I had proposed. But he understood very quickly; he had enough other problems on his plate. The circuits were overloaded already. It could not have been brought off. On a worldwide basis, it would have had the same effect as Nixon's opening to China that Kissinger managed. Had it worked out, it would have been a home run, but I had to conclude that the chances were very slim and the down-side risks were just too great.

*Q: Speaking of the President's entourage, do you have any comments on Ollie North and his activities?*

MOTLEY: I left my job as Assistant Secretary on July 1, 1985. So throughout the airing of the Iran-Contra affair, I would immediately look when various events were supposed to have happened. I am happy to say that all the alleged shenanigans took place after I left. I am not inferring that they ever took place in ARA, but, whatever occurred, took place after my departure. ARA did get besmirched by some of the allegations. Ollie North, during the time I knew him, was a Major in the Marine Corps. He was a good NSC staff officer; he was a capable "action officer" as he might have been designated in DOD—that

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is a junior to middle grade officer who is given a considerable amount of direction and is expected to produce a considerable amount of paper work. He was supposed to make things happen; that's the definition of an "action officer". But in the Pentagon, at least, he would have worked under a fairly strict set of guidelines and direction and not be given much latitude or room for judgment. As an "action officer", Ollie was very good. I could always call him and ask: "Ollie, where is that paper? It has been over in the NSC for four months". He would tell me on whose desk it was and promise to see that it get moved to the next echelon. That he did very well. During my tenure, he had a very strong affinity towards the Contras; he would have tears in his eyes when he talked about them. Part of his tears on TV was an act; I knew him well enough to know that. But part was not; he was a real romantic. He wrote poetry—that does not mean that all people who write poetry are romantics. But the Contras were his emotional outlet. They were his romantic dream to whom he had developed an emotional attachment. That resulted in a somewhat faulty judgment. When I was in ARA, he was not allowed to exercise it. I thought him to be less than totally mature and I think that judgment was shared by other people. Bud McFarlane kept a short leash on him; he had a "father complex" toward North. Art Munroe, who was a three star Admiral and the executive assistant to the JCS Chairman, also had a stern relationship which kept Ollie on the straight path. Ollie responded to that. If you would tell Ollie to go from A to B and return and not tell him how to go about it, he would do it usually in a most direct way. He was good at taking directions. I assume, but since I wasn't around, can't say for certain, that he had little respect for Poindexter and that may have gotten him into trouble. Art Munroe had left the JCS. So Ollie was allowed to operate on his own within the NSC arena and he had terrible judgment. He thought, I am sure, that he was being a wonderful patriot, but in fact he was exercising poor judgment. He may also have been "left hanging". I knew more about how the system operated in those days than most people and can therefore make a more informed guess about what was going on, but I don't really have an idea of what was going on after I left ARA.

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Ollie was a major player in the Grenada operation. To the extent that I needed and could get things done in the White House, Ollie spent twenty-hours per day on it. He did a first class job. He felt he could make a difference in Central America. He had his own opinions, which didn't always prevail. But on Central America issues, we would be checkmated on occasions by the "heavy breathers" of whom Ollie was one. They might have wished to go in one direction, which we thought was foolish. Then a stalemate would develop; that is the way government operates sometimes. That was certainly true for the Manzanillo talks; we were stalemated. It was fortunate that the Sandinistas didn't want to dance at the time, because we would have been incapable of dancing at the time. We had gridlock in the decision-making process on how to proceed.

*Q: Let me ask about Elliott Abrams, whom I find very difficult to understand. He apparently showed lack of honesty with Congress, which as you mentioned before, is counter-productive. Abrams was then Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, How did you view him and did you think he was after your job?*

MOTLEY: You are dead in Congress if you are not fully up-front. I learned that when I was a lobbyist even before I was in the government. In Congress, you have only one asset: your word. When that is not believed, you are in trouble. You have had it.

I never had the feeling that he was after my job. In fact, I was surprised when Shultz told me who he had selected. I had been after Shultz for months to find a successor. So when he finally told me who it was, I was surprised. Human Rights was an adversarial Bureau in the Department. It has put out an annual report on all foreign countries on the status of human rights in each; it is a report card on 155 sovereign nations, which is the ultimate in arrogance. But that was Congressionally mandated. So there are 155 ambassadors and five regional assistant secretaries who have to clean up the mess that the report makes every year. I mean we comment on the British; we do it on everybody. So Congress has constructed an adversarial process. Even if the Bureau is objective and truthful, there will be problems; if they can't find any human rights problems, there is no reason for the

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Bureau. That is a bureaucratic fact of life. So they have to find problems if they want to keep their jobs. I had only one run-in with Elliott; I had enough on my plate; I didn't have time to deal with that report. I let someone else deal with it. I only got involved if there was a major issue like El Salvador, which the H.R. Bureau wouldn't write about until a year later anyway. From a practical point of view, they are not going to make it better or worse. It doesn't have any effect on our policies. Maybe they did during the Carter years, but certainly not during my time. They were a side light. They would write an annual report. I had one instance with Elliott which irritated me and I confronted him on it. But we sorted it out to my satisfaction. I had just visited Chile and on the way back, I was on a lay-over in Miami at six a.m. The paper reported that he had shot his mouth off on something in my area which was just not true. I was so irritated that I called the Operations Center and made them get Ken Dam, the Deputy Secretary, out of bed. I told him that I wanted to see Elliott in his, Dam's, office or else I would go public in response to Abrams' stupid statement. Dam told me to calm down, but I was really steamed. So Elliott and I had a session with Dam and we got it resolved.

*Q: You left voluntarily, I gather?*

MOTLEY: Yes. In December 1984, we had gotten what subsequently had become a group of 29. We had had a series of Ambassadorial changes; many of my people were eligible for transfers and I had gotten them well positioned. I was getting close to four years of government service. I was tired having worked eighty hours each week. I have a history of going in and out of government. I had spent seventeen years in government, but I like to move in and out. It was time to go out. The elections were over; Grenada was done. Central America was still an alive issue, but there wasn't any end-game in sight. It just would have been more of the same. So I went to the Secretary in December, 1984 and told him that I would like to leave within a reasonable period of time, and I hoped that he would begin to think of a successor. I told him that I had hoped that my wishes would be kept quiet because if they had become public, he—Shultz—would not have a free hand in picking a successor, because everybody wanted to get into the act, and I would be a

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"lame duck". So it was not in either of our interests to have my resignation become public; he agreed. He tried to talk me out of it, which was very nice of him. But nothing happened. I mentioned it to him again, later, in a private chat; he said he would go ask the President. He told me later that the President would like me stay through the Contra vote assistance in Congress. I agreed but said I hoped that the authorization would be through Congress by July 1. Then Shultz asked me for replacement suggestions. I gave him four names: two career Foreign Service officers and two non-career, whom I thought could do the job. Time passed and finally in April or May,, one of my Assistant Secretary colleagues came to me to say that it was terrible that I was leaving. So I went to see Shultz and told him what had happened; that meant that the word was getting out and I was going into a "lame duck" situation; and he was going to have his flexibility reduced. About three days later he called me and told me that Elliott Abrams was his choice. I said fine, but I asked him to announce it so that we would not get into the never-never land. And that is what Shultz did; in one day, he said Motley was resigning and that Abrams was his choice to succeed me. Brief. It is the only way to handle situations like this. Of course, there were all sorts of stories that I had been fired, etc. I had warned Shultz that this was the way the story would be written by some and that he and the President could help by saying the right things. They did that very well.

Interestingly enough, the morning Shultz made his announcement, it was also mentioned at the senior White House staff meeting. A couple of the people later wrote books which said that they had had a hand in firing me, when in fact, the first time they heard about it was at a staff meeting. The way history is written in Washington is absolutely unbelievable; it is fascinating.

*Q: Since you retired, you have been running an Ambassadorial seminar. Tell us a little about that.*

MOTLEY: In the State Department, there is a process by which every new Ambassador, career and non-career, before going to his new post attends an Ambassadorial seminar.

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It used to be one day, then it became three days. When I went through it, it was five day session; now it lasts almost two weeks. In July, 1985 when I left the Department, George Shultz asked me to get involved in the Seminar. So Shirley Temple Black, the Director of FSI Charles Bray, and I became sort of co-chairpersons of the Seminar. I have conducted every Seminar since July 1985. I have lost count of the number of Seminars I have participated in, but it is well over twenty sessions. There are twelve in a Seminar which would make more than 240 Ambassadors. I have some repeats when after their first Ambassadorial stint, they were assigned to another, and decided to take a refresher course. In the April '91 group, there was an Ambassador who was attending the seminar for the third time in less than six years.

It is a very useful experience. It is a living experience in that we change it continually. Many of the changes are based on the comments of the participants. Also the job of the Ambassadors are changing. That is what I find the most fascinating. One of my hobbies is the issue of leadership and management, especially in the public sector. I enjoy doing it, I enjoy watching it, I enjoy analyzing it. I think an Ambassadorial assignment is one of the most fascinating jobs around. It is unique; it is undefined and it is always changing. The famous Ambassadors of the past—Averell Harriman, George Kennan, Ellsworth Bunker—would be stunned today by where they would have to put their time and attention. They would be held accountable and responsible for matters which they would not have known in their days. The whole concept of what an Ambassador and his or her Embassy is and what it is expected to do has changed significantly since their days and it keeps changing. The main change is in the area of accountability and responsibility, for, first, security—which is a big issue because of terrorism—and secondly, for the use of taxpayers' resources, both human, but more importantly, financial. Those are the main areas of change.

*Q.: When you begin with a new group of Ambassadors, what points do you emphasize?*

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MOTLEY: First of all, I don't care what their experiences as junior officers, or maybe even as DCMs, might have been, but if they have not been overseas in the last two years in positions of some importance in an Embassy, they will find major changes. It was not like it was when they were there; it has changed.

Secondly, I make the point that they have an extraordinary set of authorizations, more powerful than any others in the U.S. government with the exception of the President. Their authorizations are more powerful—in the sense of clear and defined—and succinct than that of Cabinet officers. The authorizations stem from a series of sources, one of which is the Foreign Service Act and the other is the Presidential letter which each Ambassador receives. That contains an extraordinary set of authorizations which, in essence, has the President saying that the Ambassador has responsibility for the activities of all United States Government operations and for the conduct of all employees of the Executive Branch, with the exception of a couple of specifically stated entities, such as the military Unified Commanders. But all the other military staff are included. It is an exceptional set of authorizations; not even Cabinet officers have such clear cut authorizations.

*Q: How do they learn to exercise these authorizations?*

MOTLEY: We use examples. It is a fascinating process. I tell them that an Ambassador sends signals. They have a problem which I call the “pedestal” problem. Historically, the embassy staff will want to put you on a pedestal. That is what embassies like to do for their ambassadors. It is a wonderful thing, it is part of the lore and tradition— “Yes, Mr. Ambassador” or “No, Mr. Ambassador” or “Right away, Mr. Ambassador”. You drive up in your car, flags flying and somebody rushes up to open your door. You speak and people write down your every word. The down-side is that you begin to believe your own press notices. You have to be careful. The embassy will try to put the ambassador on a pedestal; I spend the training period trying to knock him or her off. We try to keep them human.

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An ambassador sends signals from that pedestal. One of my predecessors was shy, and he tended to walk around with his head down. The embassy staff thought he was mad at them because he wouldn't say "hello". It was nothing of the kind. He just behaved that way and was not an expression of any feelings, one way or the other. So an ambassador can send signals without even knowing it. Ambassadors have to remember that if they smile or frown or say "hello" or don't say "hello", their demeanor will be interpreted, rightly or wrongly. They are the unelected mayors of the community and are always on display. They should never forget that. Ambassadors send signals and that is the way they exercise their authority.

For example, historically, a career Foreign Service officer will visit the political and economic sections and maybe even the AID mission, when he or she becomes ambassador. If however the new ambassador knows that he or she has a problem in another section—be it agriculture, military or whatever, he or she should visit that one first. That is one way of exercising the authority. You send a signal to the rest of the embassy that the ambassador thought enough of that particular office that he or she went there first instead of the Political Section. An ambassador can exercise his or her authority in a variety of different ways.

Another illustration of the same point: how does the ambassador conduct a country team meeting? Who gets called on first? Or who is not called? That is another way to exercise authority.

Ambassadors who do not visit their consular or administrative sections are not rare occurrences. It was particularly true in the old days; it may be changing now. I went to my consular section once a week. I found consular work an interesting area; many ambassadors don't pay enough attention to it. Ambassadors also forget, and I make this point during the seminar, that many foreigners are first exposed to the United States through the Consular Section. How that Section operates, both the Americans and the local staff, and how it looks—Is it shabby? Has it been painted? Does it have a



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new carpet? Are there nice pictures of America on the wall—is important. Unless an ambassador thinks it is important, the administrative officer will not think it is important. So one of the rules that I stress is that if an ambassador thinks something is important, the rest of the embassy will think so too. If I went to the Consular Section once a week, you can believe that the DCM also visited it. If the Consular officer believes that the rug is getting shabby, you can bet that the administrative officer will respond, because he knows that the next complaint will be made to the ambassador. That is another way of exercising authority.

I also tell ambassadors that the best, untapped source of intelligence in any embassy are the consular officers. They are talking to local citizens all the time, not only in the visa line, but also when they are bailing American citizens out of jail, and when they do all the other stuff that they do. They gather information about what the ordinary citizen thinks and what the vibes and feelings of the host community are. The political officer may be able to tell you what the Foreign Minister thinks or what the Cabinet are thinking about, but the consular officer can tell you what the guy in the streets thinks. They are the largest untapped source of intelligence in an embassy. Most embassies don't realize that.

*Q: The people who have these contacts are the vice-consuls who work for the Consul General. How as an ambassador do you reach to those levels?*

MOTLEY: Vice-consuls are usually junior officers, and so while exercising your responsibility for the junior officers, you also get a chance to tap their knowledge. I used to encourage the junior officers, all of whom were in the consular section, to submit reports to me. I wanted to see them. If they had an interesting conversation on a subject, I wanted them to pursue it and write a report—I didn't care what the subject was: labor unrest, etc. I just wanted them to run it down and let me know. If an ambassador was going to see their reports, I knew that they would spend some time on it. I also knew that a political officer would read them.

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The other real sources were the Foreign Service nationals, that is the citizens of the host country who worked for the embassy who are known as “locals”.

You exercise your authority by showing leadership in management. About five years ago, the lore in the State Department was that “we don't know how to manage; we have to learn to be managers”. That's fine; I agreed. Most political officers don't know how to manage. Some administrative officers are better managers because they have had to learn. So the big objective in the Department was to make managers out of the officers. That is fine. But in reality, and simplified, DCMs are the managers; ambassadors are the leaders. An ambassador in addition to being a manager has to be a leader. He can only be a good leader if he can manage. I try in the seminar to get away, to a certain extent, from the management syndrome and emphasize the leadership role. I tell the ambassadors that never have their positions been so risky both physically and professionally as it is today.

*Q: The physical risks are obvious; there are people who want to kill an ambassador to make a political statement. But what about the professional risks?*

MOTLEY: The chances are that if an ambassador is removed, or as I phrase it, “they come home before they expect to”, it will not be over a difference on substance. It will be for reasons that an Averell Harriman or a George Kennan never considered. It might be because the Marines' house was rocketed, as it was just last week in Chile when I was there. Tony Gillespie will not (and should not) be recalled for that, but there will be convened a Board of Accountability, headed by a former Foreign Service officer, which will ask: “When did you stop beating your wife?”. It will be a Napoleonic type of approach, demanding that the ambassador explain why he was not at fault for what happened. There are no hard feelings, but that is what the law requires. Bob Gelbard in Bolivia just went through one. Any time you have an incident of this kind, a Board of Accountability is convened. That's what I meant by the professional risks now run by ambassadors.

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There are all kinds of checks on an ambassador. The Inspector General's Office is three times as big as it used to be. They have auditors looking at operations all the time. I told Larry Eagleburger, now the Deputy Secretary, a year ago that if he and I operated today as ambassadors as we respectively did in Yugoslavia and Brazil, we both would probably be in jail or fired or both. We took a much more swashbuckling approach to things. Now you have to make sure that your consular officer does the cash count personally, and not assign it to a local employee. If the inspection report says that the cash count was not made by an American, the ambassador is as guilty as the consular officer. Accountability for all embassy operations are part of an ambassador's responsibilities. All that the administrative officer or his budget and fiscal officer does, is part of an ambassador's accountability.

Arthur Hartman, our former Ambassador to Moscow, a senior Foreign Service officer, well respected for years, ended his career on a sour note because there was a security penetration of his Embassy. It happened on his watch. What I found disgraceful about that episode was that not one member of the Foreign Service stood up and pointed out that this officer had had a distinguished career for twenty-eight years—a honorable career during which he performed above and beyond his duty—and that he should not be trashed on this one isolated incident. I told that to the Director General. It was appalling. It would not have happened in the military; they would have closed ranks around a Hartman. The Foreign Service is not good at doing that sort of thing. There is no doubt, of course, that Art did distance himself from the Marine security guards; an ambassador can not afford to do that. They must be watched; they are young kids, nineteen years old, first or second tour Marines, they are bachelors; they are assigned to a very strange situation. They don't live in a barracks; they live in what is more akin to a fraternity house. The Gunnery Sergeant can visit the house and tell them to clean up their rooms because there would be an inspection. But the Sergeant has a wife and doesn't live there; they are young blooded American boys and have boom-boxes and all that. Secondly, the Sergeant is four time zones—three thousand miles away from his commanding officer. That is not how the

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Marine Corps operates; there is usually a platoon leader within shouting distance. So the Marine Corps puts tremendous amount of responsibility on this Gunnery Sergeant. Thirdly, you are asking the guard to defend bricks and mortar. Marines are trained to take beaches, not to defend bricks and mortar. So you have taken the guards out of their “comfort zones” in three respects. Ambassadors need to understand that; they need to stop and talk to the Marines; they need to know if anything is bothering them. There is always a problem. One way you can tell that there is a problem is, if all of a sudden, the number of security violations rise in an embassy. If the average runs one per week and all of a sudden it rises to seven per night, then you know you have a problem. The Marine Security Detachment is sending a message, which is, either they are at war with the ambassador or the embassy, or they are at war with the Sergeant. It is one or the other. But you can be sure that they are at war with someone. Something is wrong. But I have seen ambassadors just sail right through such a situation and never talk to the Marines. They don't go to their TGIFs. I am afraid that is what Art did; so he had no idea of what was going on. I don't expect the ambassador to be knowledgeable of who is spying and who is not, but he should know if there something fundamentally wrong in the Detachment. The Board of Accountability found that Art didn't pay sufficient attention. In his case, it would not have made any difference whether he knew or not; he apparently really didn't care. That may have been a bad rap, but that is what they found.

*Q: What do you tell, particularly the non-career ambassadors, about Washington instructions?*

MOTLEY: I tell them that the time to reclama a decision or a deadline is when it is given, not when it is due. So if an ambassador receives an instruction that he or she doesn't like, negotiate right then and there. Tell Washington that you would be happy to do whatever was requested, but that it should be reconsidered one more time. Ask whether Washington really wants the ambassador to charge up that hill and then fall on his sword? Is that really what we want? The multi-lateral instructions—that is, when all posts are instructed to do the same thing within a similar time frame—you can't really do anything about.

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Depending on what country you are assigned, the ambassador may have the freedom to decide whom he should see and when. Washington understands that. But that situation is different than a bilateral one. But a good ambassador will find an informal way to get the instructions changed. The Foreign Service Bible says you write your own instructions and that is correct. If an ambassador is aggressive, he or she will be way ahead of the curve and in effect will have written his or her own instructions. That ambassador is not sitting back waiting for someone in Washington to tell him or her what to do. That ambassador has already prepped that Washington official and primed him; he or she may have even sent a draft of the instructions to Washington. I firmly believe that this is the right course. Washington is usually in gridlock with sixteen different agencies wondering what is going on and the Department is concerned about how it will look in public. No one worries more about bilateral relations than the ambassador; no one spends as much time on the issue as she or he does; maybe the desk officer does. So the ambassador is really in the driver's seat as far as the policy is concerned. You can write a message that starts with: "Unless I am otherwise directed, I am going to do the following...". That is one of the things I tell the Seminar people. You have to be intellectually honest about it. You can't write on a Friday afternoon that you will tear down the Embassy walls on Monday morning. You have to give Washington a reasonable period of time for reaction. Nine times out of ten, Washington will be glad that something is being done; if they want to say "No" someone has to feel very strongly about it. The reverse of that coin is to ask for guidance, which is favorite technique in the Foreign Service. I had a rule in my Embassy that no one was allowed to ask for guidance unless I authorized it. I didn't care whether it was guidance for lost household effects or anything else; we didn't ask for it because a) nine times out of ten nothing happened and that puts you in a dilemma and b) nine of ten times, the Embassy could resolve the problem and come up with the best solution. If Washington didn't like it, it would let you know. And thirdly, sometimes the guidance is not what you wanted and then you have a problem on your hands.

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*Q: Can you contrast and compare the career and non-career officials that attend your seminar?*

MOTLEY: If we have a Seminar with both kinds in it, I get into that right away. I'll speak to the non-career officers and tell them not to listen to the "freaks downtown" who warn you about the Foreign Service. It is in the best interest of the career service that they succeed. They should believe that. They look at a non-career ambassador somewhat differently, because they are a different breed. But they will be loyal, supportive; they want to be led—Foreign Service officers want and are happy to be led. They will question an ambassador because they are taught to question; they are not questioning an ambassador's authority, but they do want to probe ideas.

I tell both career and non-career ambassadors that if they fail as ambassadors, they will fail for different reasons. A Foreign Service officer who fails, or runs into trouble, will most likely do so because he or she has said to themselves that, after twenty-two years, or whatever, they have arrived and that the assignment was owed to them. Or worse, your spouse thinks that. If you are a non-career and you run into trouble, it will be more than likely because he or she believes that the President has given them a fiefdom and they can do whatever pleases them. They will feel that they have only one master and that is the President. If ambassadors have that view, they will get into trouble. That is a major difference between the two.

We have three different seminars. Some have both career and non-career; some have only non-career; and some only career. It depends largely on the cycle of Presidential elections as to what the mix is. The next group, in April, are all Foreign Service officers except one.

*Q: We know, of course, of Foreign Service officers who are appointed as ambassadors as a final reward for their long and faithful service, even if they don't necessarily merit the appointment. On the non-career side, I assume that you see some "social butterflies" or*

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*some lightweights who have no idea what it is all about, but are essentially concerned with the title.*

MOTLEY: It is inactivity and omission on the part of a Foreign Service officer. But if he is skilled he may just follow the "Peter Principle". He hasn't done anything or made waves for many years. The political appointee, on the other hand, is usually overactive; so active, often, that when he goes he makes a big splash in the pool. Either he is too much of a social participant; or he insults the king; or offends a local newspaper—whatever. But he is active; that is the difference between the two.

I think I can spot the problems. I recognized that our Ambassador to Italy, who had a terrible press before he left, would make a good ambassador and he did. His problem was that he had shot off his mouth too often and I told him so. He is the one who said that Italians build their rowboats with glass bottoms so that they could look at their Navy. I couldn't believe he said that. Then he made some sexist remarks. But he has done a fine job in Rome; even Eagleburger the other day issued a notice to all embassies based on an innovative program that he started in Italy. I predicted when he was in the Seminar that he would do well, because he had good basic instincts and good management skills. He wanted to learn; he had "street smarts". His problem was just his mouth. He was smart enough to understand that he had to control it. He had a terrible reputation, but I told him that might be a benefit because everyone thought that he would fail. If he did just a mediocre job, he would be a hero; he has done better than that.

I can tell by the end of the second day who will be acceptable and who won't be. That goes for either career or non-career. If it is a political appointee, I will offer to see them privately at lunch or at the breaks. I have done that. Some are insecure and appreciate the help. I don't do that with Foreign Service officers, unless they approach me. In either case, at the end of the session, if I perceive one to be a problem, I go to see the appropriate regional assistant secretary and tell him that I have spent a week with Mr. or Ms. X and that I feel that he or she is below par and give the reasons for my view—his or her

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judgment is poor, or whatever the case may be. A couple of the assistant secretaries have thanked me for the warnings; otherwise they may never have found out until it was too late.

*Q: What is your impression of the ambassadors that we assign?*

MOTLEY: It is a mixed bag. It is up and down. Over a period of time, I have found that the early Bush appointees were not up to the standards that I expected. I found that the second round of Foreign Service appointees was also not up to the standards I expected. They were adequate but perhaps not the best. I guess part of the problem was that I knew some that didn't get appointed and I knew them well enough to know that they were better qualified than those who got appointed. The Department has gone overboard on the Equal Employment Opportunity; if you are a woman of sufficient high rank, you will be appointed as ambassador. That may sound chauvinistic, but it is that simple. It is a fact. One of the senior female members of the Foreign service, for whom I have a lot of respect, told me after her tour as an ambassador, that some of the jobs being offered to her were only because she was a woman. They were jobs to which she would normally not aspire. But it is not only women; it is minorities in general. The Department is on a "quota" system; if anybody thinks differently, they don't know whereof they speak. Also, George Vest was a hard act to follow as Director General. He was very good; very tough with good political instincts. I don't think his successor has the same grasp of the job.

*Q: Thank you very much for a most interesting interview. We greatly appreciate the time you have devoted to this effort.*

End of interview